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UNDER THE DOME

A. F. Winnington Ingram

Miss Anna Rochester

Oct. 19, 1907

Under the Dome

212

Under the Dome

By the

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To

MY MOTHER

Preface

THIS volume of sermons is printed in fulfilment of a promise made when I resigned my post as Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral on becoming Bishop of London, a fulfilment which has been long delayed, partly by the pressing duties which came upon me in my new post, and partly by the difficulty of turning the reports of sermons delivered extempore into readable chapters. Indeed, this latter task would have been impossible but for the help of my chaplain, the Rev. H. P. Cronshaw, who has spent much time and labour upon it, and even now we feel that there are many imperfections.

I have ventured to give this little volume the title of "Under the Dome" because all the sermons were preached in St. Paul's Cathedral,

and it is the Dome which is at once the special fascination and the peculiar mystery of St. Paul's Cathedral. "Under the Dome" you are preaching as it were to humanity; far as the eye can see, on a Sunday afternoon, as a rule, is a sea of human faces, all with their hopes, their fears, their sins, and their temptations, and the simple message which this book contains has no meaning except in relation to the manifold needs and longings of ordinary men and women. "Faith," "Joy," "God's Faithfulness," "The Pain of the World"—these were the subjects which seemed most appropriate on Sunday afternoons. The men and women of every class who gathered there needed daily bread for the daily battle of life.

On the other hand, so completely has St. Paul's Cathedral become the centre of the life of London that, even in the course of only a few years, a Canon of St. Paul's is called upon to give a special message to special gatherings of every kind; hence, in this volume will be found messages, however inadequately given, to Judges, Doctors, Soldiers, Temperance Workers, Missionaries, and others;

and among them the shortest will have perhaps the greatest interest of all, by reason of the interest of the occasion—an address to the City Imperial Volunteers on their return from South Africa.

I cannot, however, send out this volume without one word of loving gratitude to St. Paul's for all that it has been to me during the past five years—to the aged Dean, to my colleagues of the Chapter, to the choir, both men and boys, to the vergers and working men of the Cathedral, whose Bible-class was my weekly pleasure, and last, but not least, to the members of the Sunday afternoon congregation, for the friendship which made my time there such a happy one; and it is still a lasting source of satisfaction to know as Bishop of London that, like the heart in a great body, the heart of St. Paul's is beating true.

A. F. LONDON.

LONDON HOUSE,
32, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, S.W.
4th Sunaay in Lent, 1902.

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Faith

I

FAITH THE WAY OF PEACE

"Therefore, being justified by faith, let us have peace."—
ROMANS v. 1.

FEW will deny that the desire for peace is one of the deepest and strongest yearnings of the human soul. At this moment one seems to detect, does one not, in the heart of the country a great longing for peace? Whatever view men have taken about the war, they long now to see its end. We should like to see our boys again. We have spared them for the country's work ungrudgingly, but now through the whole nation the prayer rises, "Let us have peace—if it can be permanent, and if it can be with honour—Let us have peace!"

And is not the heart's desire of the nation to-day the permanent longing of every individual soul? Truly, it is a very stirring thought to think

that this great assemblage of human souls is passing into the winter to face a future absolutely unknown. The late Dean of St. Paul's uttered a great truth when he said, "We are all of us like children lost on a dark common at night by ourselves." And the thought that every one of us in this mass of human souls is passing into the winter, with unknown trials, unknown difficulties, unknown temptations, makes this certain: that what we most need, if we are to play our parts like men and women in it, is peace—peace of conscience, peace of mind, peace of heart. Whatever we have or have not, let us have peace.

Now, few would deny that this is true, least of all worried men of business; but a great number, if they spoke out the real thought of their heart, would confess their surprise at St. Paul's announcement of the first step towards peace: "Therefore, being justified by faith, let us have peace." There is no doubt that, to an ordinary Englishman, there is a sense almost of irritation at the use of theological terms. He does not understand them. They may be clear to the clergyman, but they mean nothing to him; they seem to have nothing to do with life, nothing to do with the world as ordinary men know it. And of all phrases, of all

theological terms which puzzle most the ordinary layman, I believe that this phrase, "justification by faith," is the most puzzling. "Why," says the layman, "as far as I can see, St. Paul is wrong. In the City, on the Stock Exchange, a man is considered justified by what he does. We respect a man's profession of faith, but the thing which we look to as practical men is the way in which that profession of faith is carried out in his life. After all, it can only be by conduct, by character, that anyone is justified at all." And so, again, from another point of view, it may be urged that this faith seems a far-away, unpractical thing. "One man has a strong imagination, and he has no doubt whatever in his mind that he is justified, that he is all right with God; while another, ten times as good a man, but morbidly inclined, very modest and self-depreciatory, seems to have no confidence about it at all." And yet another says—and this objector would have the late Professor Jowett on his side—"After all is said and done, is not this contrast between faith and works in the Epistle to the Romans out of date altogether, for whoever met a man who thought he would be justified by his works?"

It would seem that one use of the afternoon

sermons at St. Paul's is to face and drag out such difficulties as these from the hearts of men, and see if there is not some sort of an intelligible answer to be given to them. Religion is in a poor and miserable place if it is to be held with the heart, but not with the mind and intellect at all. Let us see, therefore, whether such objections as these are true or not.

And first let us overthrow those very common and popular misconceptions about faith. Is the faith made so much of in the Bible really concerned merely with sentiment or feeling or imagination? If it has nothing to do with character or life or acts, then there are no words strong enough to be found with which to hold it up to contempt. But let us take two or three illustrations from real life of what faith is, and from them we shall glean some sort of idea why such a tremendous stress is laid in the Bible on the possession of it. And, first of all, picture an explorer starting in his ship for the Arctic regions. He has planned out this expedition possibly for years. He has studied the lie of the country he is going to, and has learnt what he can about the ocean currents and the icebergs. He has picked his men with great care; he has spent, or his friends have spent, an immense sum upon

the fitting out of an expedition, and the great moment has come at last. There is a crowd around, watching the start; the farewells are said with deep emotion, and the moment comes when the moorings are unloosed and the ship is launched upon her way. All this is an act of faith, and the act of faith carries whatever follows with it. The leader is trusting his men; the men, who know little about the journey, have confidence in their leader, and by that faith they stand upon the deck calm and quiet as the last vestiges of their home are lost to sight in the distance. And as they stand there they have peace, because they are justified by their faith. Can we say that such faith has no bearing upon their character, or stands apart from their lives? Surely the whole voyage is planned in faith and worked by faith. It is faith that carries them all through these long days that are also nights; it is faith that keeps them firm and brave and courageous whether in death or life.

Or, take another instance. A girl is sitting in her room on the last night before she leaves her home. She is to be married on the morrow, and all the unknown future spreads itself before her. She has never left her home before. What keeps

her steady as she faces unknown duties, unknown trials, and possibly unknown disaster in the future? What is it that enables her to give her answer firm and clear the next day before her assembled friends in God's house? It is her faith in the man she loves. She has given him, not hastily, her trust and confidence, and at the crisis of her life it is her faith that nerves her, and sends her out, full of loyalty and faithfulness to him, and ready to co-operate with him in all the work of the future. In the great adventure of her life she is justified by faith.

Or once again (for these things which concern life can best be illustrated from life), a young man has volunteered for the war. He does not know much about what war means; its peril and pain are only dimly seen. But he hears the call of Duty, of King, of Country, and he gives in his name. It is an act of faith. Has that faith nothing to do with him in the after-days—has it no power on that young man's character and life as he finds perhaps ten times as much to bear as he ever thought to bear? Why, it is his faith that keeps him strong and brave at the post of duty. It is his faith that is the very main-spring of all he does. And it is his faith by which he is

justified in the end. As an Eton boy, who volunteered to go with Gordon before he had ever seen him, wrote to one of the masters of the school after he had met and known him, "I did not make a mistake."

Now, if trust in the faithfulness of nature, faith in a human personality, however fallible, is such an ennobling thing, penetrating so intimately into human character, how are we to measure the inspiring power of faith in an overruling, living God, utterly omniscient and full of unfathomable love and pity—faith in that redeeming Love which is symbolized in the great Cross, towering above our head in this generation as it towered above the head of generations in the past—faith in the Divine wind of the Holy Spirit, bearing our barque onward into an unknown future, but pledged to bring us into port at last? At least we may say this, that the greater the object of faith, the more ennobling the faith becomes, and that St. Paul is justified when first among the powers which mould the Christian character he places faith.

But, if faith is so intimately concerned with character, and we can only know character as it is revealed in works, what is the meaning of the vivid contrast which St. Paul draws between faith

and works as the means of our justification before God? And how can a single momentary act of faith like that recorded of the Penitent Thief be credited with such supreme importance as appears in the Gospel story? The answer lies in the fact that faith is the one great quality within us which is supremely capable of education, while any attempt to be justified by works is apt to lead towards a deadening satisfaction with our present condition. Let me quote extracts from two books published lately, which place this before us with startling clearness:

In the first we read: "The essence of Pharisaism does not consist in broad phylacteries and prayers at the corners of the street; it lies rather in a low standard fairly well fulfilled, in a generally diffused sense of satisfaction which forbids progress by crushing the motive from its source."*

Again, Canon Gore writes in his recent book "On the Epistle to the Romans":

"Conscientiousness within a limited and well-established area accepted by public opinion, coupled with resentment at whatever completer, Diviner claim may interfere to disconcert one's self-satisfac-

* "An Essay towards Faith" (Robbins). Published by Longmans, Green and Co.

tion and bid one begin afresh from another basis, is the very attempt to be justified by works."

"A low standard fairly well fulfilled!" "Conscientiousness within a limited and well-established area." But, surely, this convicts nine out of ten of us of sin. Is not that exactly what so many of us are liable to do? I will take a schoolboy as my illustration. Often in his straightness and innocence he is an example to us. But many a boy at school simply founds his morality on what the "form" of the school tells him to do and be. Not for anything would he sink below that "form," below what is "good form" in his school. But how often, at any rate in the past, has the standard of good form been below the Commandments? And if the boy confines his standard of morality to the social morality which is commonly accepted in his school, he lives up to that, and thinks that is all he has to do. Even as a boy he is seeking to be justified by works. Or, take a man with far less excuse, in the prime of life. He founds his morality, his standard of living, upon that of the set in which he lives. "What is the least," a man is said to have asked once, "a gentleman can give?" Exactly. The cry of some charity, the

cry of the poor, had made itself heard in his ears, and his response was, "What is the least a gentleman can give?" Are none of us, gathered here from all parts of London, seeking to be content with the standard of our set? Because it is not the fashion in West London to believe in Foreign Missions, and because a deaf ear is too often turned to the cry of the victims of what is called "the social evil," a man is too often content to say, "So long as I live up to the standard of my set, this is all I have to do."

Or take a working-man—and this, with a little change of language, applies to every class—how many a working-man on his death-bed have I sought to stir to penitence and contrition for his past, and have been met by the perfectly frank answer, "I have not been before the magistrate, sir. I have never done anyone any wrong. I am no worse than my neighbours." What is this contentment with the standard of one's class, except the desire to be justified by works—to say, So far need I go and no farther? And clergymen are as liable to the temptation as much as anyone else: "I have had my two services; I have gone through the stated regulations of a clergyman's duty." Why, it is just what the Pharisee said:

"I have fasted twice in the week; I have paid tithes of all I possess." Do we not see that the reason that such a state of mind is so hopeless is because it cannot be educated, it cannot go on to anything better? God cannot do anything with a soul that looks to be justified by works. It is self-satisfied and self-complacent; there is no progress about it. But faith is just the opposite; it forgets self, and flings itself upon God. Faith forgets the things that are behind, the pitiful attainments of the past, and looks forward to the things that are before. Faith turns from the petty trivialities of life, and busies itself in the great realities of heaven, and because even a little faith, small perhaps as a grain of mustard seed, is capable of education, because God can take such a soul and educate it both in this world and the world beyond the grave, therefore faith justifies and saves, and everything is possible to him that believes.

So we stand face to face with this question. In other addresses we may have time to look at other aspects of this great subject. We are now face to face with this perfectly plain question, Are we seeking to be justified by works, or are we seeking to be justified by faith? We see the

hopelessness, the conceit, of attempting to be justified by works. Let us resolve to cultivate in our hearts this justifying faith. For this is the way of peace. It will take time, it will mean much more trouble than we often give to our souls; it will mean getting up in the morning in time to think over these things and say our prayers and get into touch with the great realities of God; it will mean not only once purging the conscience at the foot of the Cross, but keeping it progressively enlightened with all the further light God may shed upon it. It will mean saying, not in a tone of resignation, but as the inspiration of life, "Not my will, but Thine be done." It will mean being ready to go anywhere and do anything if it is clearly shown to be God's will; it will mean all that, but it will also mean peace. To be out of our own hands is to be in the hands of God, and to be justified by faith is to have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

II

THE STRAIN UPON FAITH

"Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens, and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds. Thy righteousness standeth like a strong mountain; thy judgments are like the great deep."—PSALM XXXVI. 5, 6.

IN the last address we faced together some of the questions which arise in connection with the supreme importance which in the Bible is attributed to faith. And in answer to these, by illustration from different sides of life, we saw that faith is a justifying power, because, just as the acorn carries the future oak and the seed the future harvest, so the initial act of faith carries with it the life that springs from it; and, above all, that the reason why so great stress is laid on the difference between being justified by works or being justified by faith, is that the man who seeks to be justified by works has no secret of

progress in him—he is content with what he is; whereas to be justified by faith is to have the earnest of future education, both in this world and the world to come.

Now we pass to the other side — the lurid side—of the matter; and our subject is "The Strain upon Faith." And it seems essential to emphasize, and frankly admit, the strain on faith, because we see all around us those whose faith snaps like a rope which has not been prepared for the strain put upon it, because of that foolish optimism which refuses to face the facts of life in time. Suffer me to take four instances which have come under my own observation lately of the immense strain which faith has to bear in life.

There is a man of great power and originality, who has lived a most useful life—popular with all his friends, dearly loved by his family, in the very prime of his usefulness and energy and strength. He lies to-day in one of the hospitals of London, a skeleton of his former self, face to face with Death. Is there no strain—put yourself in his place—upon his faith? Why has this visitation come upon him? There was no special misconduct, no rashness, to bring him into this pass.

The Strain upon Faith

Struck down a few months back by a sudden deadly disease, his professional income lost—what a strain it has upon his faith, as he looks Death in the face! And, worst of all, he is unable to care for and tend those whom he loves on earth. Why is it? Is there any Providence controlling the world at all, or has the world slipped out of the hands of God?

Again, within three days, a girl in the very fulness of life and health, the brightness and the life of her home, not only unselfish herself, but the spring of unselfishness in all around her, engaged to be married only this month to someone entirely worthy of her, has been snatched away from her family, and from him whom she loves. In that house it is as if the lights had been suddenly blown out, and the cold rooms left in darkness. Friends come and speak about the rest and peace which she has reached, but it was life that she wanted; she was the very embodiment of life—of life and activity. Is there no strain on the faith of those who loved her?

Or, consider one around whom, when he returns to England, the whole Church should gather with love and sympathy. Consider the case of a Bishop who has been compelled to see

the whole work of twenty-five years wiped out in blood; every church he built with such labour burnt; his converts, many of them murdered and some recanting under fear of death. And, worst of all, or at least in addition to all, his wife, who shared all his anxieties and his troubles, who in that city of Tientsin, where for three weeks women and children of all nationalities suffered even far worse anxiety and torture of mind than in Pekin, stood by her husband, nursing the sick while he buried the dead, has been taken from him. He comes home. Ah, with what warmth and sympathy we must geret him! Is there no strain on the faith of a man like that?

Or let me tell you of one whom I saw a short time ago myself. He is but a boy, come out of prison after a short sentence—his first sentence. Every door has been shut against him; he meets cold looks everywhere. He had come out full of hope, full of intention to turn over a new leaf and start again, but the coldness and the suspicion all around him chilled him; he felt the strength of the old temptation come over him. He believed that there was no God to help him. When almost by chance, as the world calls it, I caught his hand, he was being swept down, in

utter despair of any help in God or man, to his ruin.

Now, the first thing we have to take care of with regard to this strain on faith is to remember that the troubles and the anxieties of life cannot be expected in themselves to produce faith. As well might a ship on which there bursts a sudden storm expect to anchor upon the waves that are breaking over her. No, we have to find a hold beneath the sea, in order to ride out the waves and storms. And, therefore, the question which is before us now is this: Is there any such hold for us in this troubled, storm-tossed life? Is there any ground upon which we can anchor firm enough to enable faith to bear the strain? And when I ask that question, it is not equivalent to the question whether or not there is a God. Out of this vast congregation nine out of ten believe there is a Power beyond ourselves at the heart of the universe, and the question is not whether there is a God, but how it is that, although nine out of every ten Christian people would utterly shrink from being thought atheistic, or even irreverent, yet, when the strain comes, so often their faith gives way? And again the question is, What is the secret of

such a conception of God as will enable the anchor to hold when the strain comes? Some of you may have read Professor Huxley's Romanes Lecture. In that lecture, delivered to the undergraduates at Oxford, he pictures, in that clear-headed, frank, and honest way of his, what he believes to be the truth about the universe. He describes its slow evolution from nothing towards what we see. He describes also, with perfect honesty, the signs of what he believes to be its gradual waning into nothingness again. And yet, as the lecture ends, and he sees the young faces which surround him on all sides, he seems to feel that his last message to Oxford must not be one of entire hopelessness, and therefore he adds, quoting from Tennyson:

> "Death closes all; but something ere the end,
> Some work of noble note, may yet be done."

And, though that peroration did credit to the kindness of his heart, and was almost inevitable before such an audience, the critics of his own way of thinking have pointed out with ruthless severity that it did not follow for a single moment from his premises. There is no middle term possible; either the gulfs may at any moment wash

us down, or there is an anchor—and not only an anchor, but a ground upon which we may cast it. What, then—that comes to be the question—are the characteristics which we shall look for in God if we are to trust Him, not only with ourselves, but with those we love?

And the first thing that we require is that our God shall be a living God. "My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God. When shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" A conception of God such as the deists possess, of a God throned in magnificent inactivity in some far-distant quarter of the universe, offers no ground upon which the anchor will hold for a moment. A pantheistic God, a vague influence, almost identical with the universe itself—that is not the God, is it, to whom we can cling when our nearest and dearest is taken away? Our soul pants for a living God—a living Presence, a Person who knows us and knows all about us, who counts the very hairs of our heads, in whose life we live, seeing that, as it is written, "all live unto Him." Ah, surely, it is a living God whom we look for, One who never allows a sigh of the least child in trouble to escape His ear.

Secondly, He must be absolutely just. If you

are trying, my brother, to combine in your mind some doctrine which does not seem to you just with your belief in God, be perfectly certain that, whatever happens to the doctrine which you are trying to believe, there can be no injustice in God. I believe that the secret of the weak faith of so many of us is this: we have got the conception of a small God, of someone about whom we do not feel quite certain. We cannot trust such an one—we cannot rest upon such an one. If we are to believe in a God, He must be a God of justice.

So, again, He must be perfectly and entirely righteous, set upon righteousness. And this righteousness and this justice must be the outcome of a perfect and entire love, not justice tempered by mercy, not justice eased off by good-nature, but the justice and the righteousness which are the outcome of an unfathomable love. Mercy and truth, in the character of God, must meet together, righteousness and peace must kiss each other.

Now, it was the conception of such a God as this which the Psalmist was able to attain. I ask you if it is possible to find a more beautiful description of such a God than that which is

pictured in the words which we have taken for the text: "Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens, and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds; Thy righteousness standeth like a strong mountain, Thy judgments are like the great deep." And the first question for us Christians is this: If a pious Jew could rise to such a conception of God—that conception which is the secret of the permanence of his race, the secret of the way in which these Psalms have inspired for generation after generation all those who have used them, into what heights of faith ought we Christians to rise who profess to believe that the incredible has happened, and that this merciful, faithful, righteous, and loving God has actually appeared? Oh! you who are so troubled about the perplexities of life, you who try to hammer out your way through the doubts which beset your faith, another time we will try and look into the way in which faith comes, and whether some of these clouds which beset it are so dark as they seem; but to-day I would urge you to come back to the revelation of the merciful, righteous, just, and loving God in Jesus Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" was His great saying, and when we know that this Incarnate Revealer of the character

of God, after having lived as a living, loving Person on earth, has passed into a yet greater life behind the veil, we ought to have, in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, that entereth in behind the veil."

But, secondly, even if we have attained to such a conception of God, we do not reach an adequate explanation of those difficulties of which we speak, nor relieve entirely the terrible strain on faith, until side by side with a really great conception of God, we set a just appreciation of the tremendous scale on which He has to work. It was our admiration the year before last to watch the skill with which our great General in South Africa conducted his campaign over a vast area of the country. As we watched it at home, from a distance, it seemed to us wonderful how his foresight and forethought have controlled an intricate series of movements over thousands of miles; and yet, if we had been at any particular spot, time after time, orders and directions which he gave must have seemed extremely puzzling. When, for instance, one of our famous Generals was ordered from Ladysmith in the last train before the siege began, it was only when that same

General was discovered afterwards as the brilliant cavalry leader who relieved Kimberley that the order was justified and explained. Now, if a great Commander-in-Chief has to work on so vast a scale, and those who are stationed at any particular point can only see a little part of his scheme, so that to them it often seems very puzzling and difficult, what are we to think about God and His Plan? When we look out at the starry heavens at night, and remember that all those millions of worlds are moving forward towards some end in space of which we in our day know no more than those who lived and wondered at them in the Psalmist's time, with what awe shall we consider the "length and breadth, and depth and height" of that Divine Wisdom in which "the end is as the beginning," and the goal of all things as certain as their course. But it is an even more inspiring thought to consider the Final End of the moral universe of God. What is He working out through all those ages? What is His plan? What is His idea? Is it not a glorious and uplifting thought that He is working out an empire with human will, that behind this little petty sphere of activity which we call earth there are wide realms of activity which we

cannot see at all, and that He is the Master and Controller of them all? We are like men in one skirmish of a gigantic campaign, and the God whom we serve is Commander of realms beyond the veil. It is here, my friends, it does seem to me, that we get some relief to the strain of faith. Our friend in the hospital of whom we thought that he was being cut off in his prime, that his active, energetic work was coming to an end—why, he is going to be promoted, trained, and fashioned, and prepared by his very suffering now for some field of activity which we cannot see. The girl who longed for life, who seemed so full of life, concerning whom it seemed impossible to believe that she was dead, what if she never was really alive until now; what if there is a field of many missions of mercy, a field of usefulness to which by her unselfishness and love she was fitted? "She asked life of Thee and Thou hast given her a long life, even for ever and ever." The Bishop and the apparent defeat of the kingdom of God—what are we to say of that? What but this: that if it takes a million years to build a continent, why should it not take a million years to build a Church? And what if the temporary rolling back of the knowledge of God is a rolling

back only to leap forward with tenfold power "till the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"? As it was in the beginning, so in our times, "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." And as to the poor lad who was almost gone, he was slipping because he had not cast himself upon the merciful, strong, righteous, and loving God. It was not because God was not strong enough, but because the boy had not grasped Him with firm enough faith. "Ho! everyone," thus saith the Great Promise, "Ho! everyone that is thirsty, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat." Come back, not to creeds about God, not to orthodox views about God, but come back to God Himself. You who are tempted, come back to God Himself; you who are in doubt, come back to the character, at once righteous and loving, of God Himself, and believe that the experience of generations testifies to the lasting truth of those words in which a modern poet sums up exactly the lesson of to-day:

"Trust God—that anchor holds."

III

THE WILL IN RELIGIOUS BELIEF

"If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."—St. John vii. 17.

A LIVING, loving, just, and righteous Being, His mercy reaching unto the heavens and His truth unto the clouds, His righteousness standing like the strong mountains, and His judgments like the great deep—that was the vision of God which we contemplated together in the last address. And yet to some who may have tried to realize this glorious vision it may perhaps seem little better than a touching dream. We will pass, therefore, to the place of the will in religious belief, and endeavour to trace the action of the will in confronting the greatest difficulties which beset faith; and I think I shall carry most of you with me in placing as the first great diffi-

culty which besets faith the greatness of God's universe when contrasted with the smallness of our planet, and our little lives.

We thought in the previous address of the great scale on which God works, the wide field of His operations reaching far into the realm behind the veil. But that thought has also another side, and many a man's faith has broken down when he has realized that we are like insects crawling along the surface of one of the smallest planets in a universe whose sun is not one of the largest among twenty millions, at least, that God has made. As an American writer, whose little book, called "An Essay towards Faith," I have commended to the attention of this congregation, says in words upon which I cannot improve, "As we figure this earth of ours, a mere dust-speck amidst countless myriads of whirling worlds, how strangely remote and unreal, like a fancy from childhood's dreamland, seems the thought of Incarnation and the doctrine of a special providence guiding the destiny of the individual to its petty ends! A great statesman on his death-bed confessed that his faith failed him when he looked at the stars. A student at one of our Universities, in the confidence of intimate converse, recently said, 'I believed until

the vastness of the universe dawned on me. Now, when I enter a church and kneel before the altar, my heart revolts at the mockery. What has this to do with the immensities and the eternities which encompass this tiny world of ours?'" And who has not at some time felt the presence of the difficulty which is here so clearly expressed?—the vastness of creation, the smallness of our planet, the impossibility at first of believing that God's own Son should have come down to have His part in so mean a sphere. The faith which was so bright in our childhood and boyhood sometimes refuses to stand the strain.

But here first the intellectual will comes into play. Once steady ourselves by an effort of the will and face this apparently enormous difficulty, and what do we find? A trick of the imagination. "Moral or spiritual facts have no relation whatever to physical size, for such moral and spiritual facts have kinship with the absolute. To suffer ourselves to be fooled by what in the last analysis is a mere unreasoning sentiment is the part of a tyro in the intellectual exercise. Special relations seem almost like a receding mirage; the mystery of magnitude is set off by the mystery of minuteness. Pray, what will

you call great — a mouse or a mountain or a myriad suns? Size is a purely relative conception. The marvellous complexity of a diatom vies in perfection with the intricacy of a star system, but honour, freedom, love—these refuse to be classed in the same category. An act of self-sacrifice would not gain in dignity and worth because the doer of it was fifty cubits high."* Follow out that thought, and you will see that the difficulty may be exactly described as a trick of the imagination. If we can once realize that the greatest things have no relation to physical size, and that all the splendour of self-sacrifice and love and truth and beauty depends in no way upon mere extent, then the overshadowing difficulty becomes a ghost. It is no difficulty to the reason, or to the heart, to believe that a planet carefully placed not too near the sun and not too far from it, guarded with evident care by seventy miles of atmosphere so as to make life possible in it, should be the home of creatures in whom the Almighty takes an infinite interest, and for whom He gave His only Son. This can only become a difficulty to the mind when we are tricked by the imagination into thinking that importance is

* "An Essay towards Faith."

measured by inches or souls by a three-foot rule.

But when the will has freed itself from this intellectual mirage, it finds itself face to face with another difficulty which apparently has far greater substance and reality. "Your faith," says the objector, "is founded on the Bible, and the Bible has been riddled through and through by the attacks of modern criticism." And, of course, if we have been foolish enough to base our faith upon a belief in the mechanical inspiration of every word of Holy Scripture, then our faith may very possibly be overthrown in the ruin of the fetich which we have made. But the Bible never teaches such a conception of itself. Its various authors write with the modesty of men who have to depend for their very foundations upon the investigation of facts. The preface to St. Luke's Gospel might have been written by a modern historian. The writers of the Bible write not as mechanical pens, but as the penmen of the Holy Ghost, and they remain in knowledge of science and contemporaneous history the true men of their own times. After all, only men can receive the breath of life, not books, so also the men who write the books are inspired, yet they

still remain men. When, therefore, we set up modern criticism as a kind of bogey which frightens our faith, when we tremble lest some new discovery shall be unearthed to take away our faith, we forget that truth cannot contradict itself. Truth must always help on truth; and, instead of finding that modern criticism has taken away the ground of faith, we shall find that "criticism at its worst does not touch the great results of Hebrew history, the supreme God-consciousness which swayed the nation's destiny and produced the mighty Messianic promise of the Prophets. It does not touch the miracle of a literature centring in the thought of Incarnation; it does not touch the unique phenomenon of four relatively independent writers drawing a picture of a Perfect Man, flawless and beautiful beyond the utmost reach of poet's dream, which no temerity of unbelievers has ever dared assail; and it has not yet suggested a plausible explanation on merely natural grounds of the great crucial fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*

We welcome, then, all the results of really truth-seeking, reverent criticism as something

* "An Essay towards Faith," p. 32.

which helps us in our faith. Mere wild guesses and a flippant or irreverent criticism we may dismiss with the contempt which they deserve; but a reverent, careful criticism of Holy Scripture makes it easier for us to rest our faith upon it; and instead of robbing us, as some think, of our mother's Bible, it has restored to us our mother's faith.

But as the will towards faith gradually makes its way through these difficulties which beset it, there is still one other which gives us pause. "Yes," I can imagine someone saying, "I can understand that the numbers in the Bible may have been corrupted in the manuscript in course of time; it is no difficulty to me that the first chapter of Genesis should not be designed to teach us science—matters of this kind I can understand; but my difficulty is, that the whole story of the Bible, with its great appeal to our faith, carries us at once into the domain of mystery. The facts are mysterious, the explanation also is mysterious." "Now, the twentieth century," as a man said to me the other day, "will not stand mystery." But "faith has as profound a reverence for facts as science has. She does not tamper with them nor pervert them. Her whole search is for an

ever clearer and stronger grasp of facts. But the truth is, that the most important facts in the world refuse to lend themselves to scientific methods of analysis—love, truth, righteousness, the insatiable yearning of the human heart for God; these facts constitute the very substance of all that is most real in human history and environment."* And as for mystery, we are encompassed by mystery, whether we like it or not. There is a mystery about science, just as there is a mystery about faith. "If faith cannot formulate an idea of God in consistent and exhaustive statements, no more can science formulate the idea of matter. She deals with certain phenomena, building up therewith an edifice of mutually interdependent laws, and applying these laws to practical ends. Faith, grounding moral and spiritual law on its apprehension of God, produces a beautifully ordered structure of right living and loving. In both cases the ultimate mystery remains unsolved."† Of course it does. We are born in mystery, we live in mystery, and we die in mystery. As one of our Saxon forefathers said, "We are in a room warm and lighted,

* "An Essay towards Faith," p. 36.
† *Ibid.*, p. 38.

and a bird flies in at one door and tarries for a moment, and then flies out at the other; so tarries for a moment the life of man in our sight, but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching (Christianity) tell us aught certainly of these, let us follow it." We are surrounded with mystery; nothing will ever be perfectly clear in this world. We only see in part, and never here shall see more than in part. But the intellectual will, facing the limitation of human knowledge, refuses for any parrot-cry of mystery to throw away that Light which has so surely illuminated the darkness of the world.

And if intellectually it is true that only those who do the will of God shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, it is even more strikingly true on the moral side. Many a man knows perfectly well that the time when his faith was weakest, when the vision of God seemed to fade away almost entirely from the soul, was when there was some moral blot or fault upon the conscience, and that the clearness with which he can behold visions of God varies with him in almost exact proportion to the care and purity with which he keeps his conscience. Only those

that will to do the will of God can know of the doctrine, because only the pure in heart can see God.

Or, again, apart from the hindrance of actual well-known sin, are there not three things which are seldom spoken of as sin, but which have a great effect in clouding the brightness of our faith? First of all, there is the pride of refinement. I know how unjust it is to speak as if the poor had all the virtues and the rich all the vices; there are none who repudiate such cant more strongly than the working-men themselves. But still, is it not true of those among you who come from comfortable homes, with all your surroundings so pleasant and refined, that sometimes this atmosphere of comfort dulls the activity of your soul, and that a Gospel of good breeding seems to rise into the place of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? And if so, what we all have to do is, by the exercise of the moral will, to face the facts. Picture yourself by an effort of the will on your death-bed—and you may be on that death-bed far sooner than you think—picture yourself lying there, and everything earthly slipping from you, the very faces of those you love on earth growing dim and vague to your eyes. What is going to

give you comfort then? Believe me, it is a flimsy comfort in the hour of death or of extreme sorrow to have belonged to a very refined circle of friends, or to have earned renown as a great social success, with a brilliant gift of repartee and conversation. But to have faced quietly and resolutely the real relations between your soul and God, to have asked yourself time after time, "What have I that I have not received? and if I have received it, why do I boast as if I had not received it?" To have taken your load of sin and laid the burden at the foot of the Cross, to have kept your conscience progressively enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit, to have preferred duty to pleasure, truth to popularity, well-doing to fame — these things shall bring a man peace at the last.

And, next, there stands over against us the tyranny of custom. Ah! we who take part in these beautiful services every day—we must beware of it. The Psalm repeated so often that even its piercing beauty is marred, its meaning lost; and the prayers, so familiar that they clog and almost dull our souls now, instead of stirring them to action:—here once more the will has to take its part against the tyranny of custom.

Through the long service the active will must be always at work, following the prayers, asking itself: "Am I entering into this sentiment which I utter? Are these words real to me? If not, O God, help me to make them real to myself." It is the will of man, with the Holy Ghost breathing through it, which is to break through the tyranny of custom.

Or think, lastly, of the more subtle forms of sloth. Those of you who go to Switzerland know what a delicious languor comes over the climber as he lies in some time of rest under the trees in a garden and looks up at the great mountain in front of him, which he knows is not his task that day. Such relaxation in a holiday is good, and only makes the climb more enjoyable on the morrow. Yet are there not many of us who, in our spiritual life, are always lying in a garden and looking languidly at the mountain of God's holiness which we hope to begin to climb some day? My friends, the subtle yielding to sloth is one of the reasons why the vision of God is so vague. Faith does not work like an idler. Faith is up in the morning and out upon the snow before the sun is up, when the snow will become too soft to tread; faith is at work, with quick

judgment deciding as to the proper track to take, and following on hour after hour unwearyingly, and determined that, if it cannot stand upon the summit at the sunrise in the full blaze of light, at least it will go on

> "O'er crag and torrent till
> The night is gone ;
> And with the morn those angel faces smile,
> Which *it has* loved long since, and lost awhile."

Thus, therefore, we come round at the end to the text with which we began. Those who do the will of God, who will to do it, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. It is a great comfort, but also a great warning. It is a great comfort. There may be some here who long to believe, but who are going through a phase of life, which many of us have gone through in the past, when all seems dark. The child's faith is all clouded over, and there is no man's faith come as yet. Nevertheless, they who do the will of God, so far as they see it to be His will, shall know at last of the doctrine. To risk ourselves upon the text means at least this—that in the worst days of doubt we never doubt that right is right, and wrong wrong; that there is always a

next step to take and a next duty to do; and the taking of that next step and the doing of that duty is a step into the light. On the other hand, it is a warning. There seem to be some who are always making up their minds. They have studied the question, they have read two sides, they have weighed the matter this way and that, perhaps for years. But they never start upon the life of faith, and they never make the great beginning because they forget that in the last resort faith is an act of the will, a voluntary adventure upon things unseen. Or, again, some of you who have begun this life but whose faith may be growing weaker and fainter, are suffering from a failure of the will. You have been stopping still, instead of going on, and to stop still is to go back. This is eternal life, to *know*—that is, according to the more accurate translation of the Greek, to go on knowing more and more—the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Life is like a great campaign. We have to prepare the provisions, we have to study the map of the country, we have to look this way and that to be sure of what we are doing, and where we are going. But

we have to march at last, and to march is an act of the will.

> "March, march onward, soldiers true,
> Take through cloud and mist your way;
> Yonder lies the fount of life,
> Yonder lives eternal day."

IV

THE ACTION OF FAITH ON THE LIFE OF A GREAT CITY

"And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle."—JONAH iv. 11.

IN the last three addresses we have studied together the nature of faith. We have seen that the first, the chief, reason why faith can justify is because it is capable of education. We next faced the awful strain on faith, when quite suddenly, perhaps, the husband, the wife, the dear brother or sister, is taken from us; and saw that the only way in which our faith can stand the strain is to hold fast not only to a great God, but to a God who works on a very great scale, taking up our dear ones, it may be into the plan of His operations in

realms far beyond our sight. Last Sunday we discussed the place of will in faith, and saw that faith in the last resort is itself an act of the will, and that no nobler account can be given of it than that it is a voluntary adventure into things unseen. But it must be quite obvious to everyone that, if this is all that can be said about faith, there is a flaw in our jewel, a defect in our portrait. All this only concerns ourselves. It would be equally true if we lived upon a desert island. And yet sometimes we find people who will almost quarrel with a sermon which is not about themselves, who keep their faith as a kind of personal appendage, who are quite ready to get a little comfort or a little strength for their own souls, but do not understand that faith is absolutely worthless if it only concerns ourselves. We talk with some contempt now of a "little Englander," but what are we to say of a "little Christian"? This, at least, is our conviction, that if faith has nothing to do with the great city of five million souls in which we live, it is a very poor thing, and if the tree of faith only bears fruit for ourselves, it is a barren fig-tree indeed.

Our subject, then, is "The Action of Faith on the Life of a Great City." And if we

listen with sympathy to the pathetic prophecy concerning Nineveh, and hear the words set into God's own lips—"Should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle—" has not London also its own appeal? Six score thousand! we could pack them into one of the smallest of our twenty-eight new boroughs. When one thinks of the intense meaning which is conveyed to us in the mere mention of its five million human beings, of the toiling horses, thousands of them, working for us every day, of the tens of thousands of sheep and oxen which pour into London to keep us alive, surely we can fancy these words as proceeding forth from God, "Should I not spare London, that great city, wherein are more than five million persons, many of whom cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle."

We first, then, face the need of faith in dealing with London. And while with a large mixed congregation like this we must pass over the worst horrors, which are none the less horrible because they cannot be spoken of here, I select three problems connected with the life of London

which test the faith of the strongest in our midst.

And we will take first the overcrowding of large districts in London. I am quite sure that you who live in the more comfortable quarters of London have not the slightest idea what this is. A clergyman in East London told me the other day that a friend of his had looked into one room in the middle of the night, and had found twenty persons of all ages and of both sexes sleeping there in that single room. And though such a sight may perhaps be an exception, yet in parts of London it is most common to find small rooms in which eight or nine persons habitually live. Look at the effect on infant mortality. What would you feel, whose dearest thoughts now are with the little child lying in the cradle at home, if the mortality of your district were what it was in the area of Boundary Street, Bethnal Green, before it was taken in hand by the County Council? Eighteen per cent. of the population is the normal death-rate at most times in London, but there, in those days, it rose to 52 per cent. The little children cannot live in such a place, and they pass away almost before they are with us. Or consider the effect of this overcrowding upon the

physique of dwellers in the slums, which has been recently brought before us by a well-known philanthropist in the North of England. Many who offered themselves for military service had to be rejected simply from the stunted physique produced by the conditions under which they live; and he pointed out, in words that have mercifully rung through England, that such a state of things, quite apart from the Christian aspect of them, is a menace to the stability and the happiness of the State of England. Then, again, think what the effect is on the moral characters of the boys and girls. There are, indeed, like lilies rising unexpectedly out of some refuse-heap, stainless girls and bright lads who come out of such homes. But although we see the exceptions, we also see the inevitable demoralisation of many. When children see and hear things that no child ought to see or hear, the refinement is rubbed off, the higher instincts grow coarser, and the dear children who might have been as bright and pure and innocent as your own are dragged down through the overcrowding of their homes. And, if we turn from the evil to the cure, how difficult it is to see what the cure ought to be! We speak of building dwellings in the country, but the traffic of a morning is so

immense upon the line which communicates with Edmonton and Tottenham, and the other places which are within reach, that it has almost broken down. We of the East London Church Fund have had to open the churches by Liverpool Street Station so that the girls and women may have a place in which to spend the two hours which they must wait after the arrival of the early train before their work begins. And if we say that model dwellings are the cure, when we have built them, at enormous cost, you will find among their inhabitants few men or women who lived in that area before—these, alas! are overcrowding some other poor district where the rent is low enough for them to pay. And so at every point the difficulty meets us, and the first thing which tests our faith, and calls forth its exercise, not merely in our personal lives, but in our civic and municipal life is the overcrowding of our city.

Then, secondly, have you all faced the state of utter demoralisation which exists in certain places? I heard lately on very good authority that during an election—when, it is only fair to say, all that is bad seems to come to the surface—one woman was induced to put up a bill in her

windows in support of the party which was not popular in her street. Twelve women of the other side attacked her, tore out her eye, and she is now lying dangerously ill in one of the hospitals in London. Not long ago a husband upset a lamp over his wife, and then kicked her to death in the flames. One sometimes hardly wonders that those who only read of these things in the papers lose their faith, and say, as was indeed said a short time ago in private conversation: "It is no good doing anything for such people as those; they are beyond all human help. Such utter animalism, such utter want of self-control, bring us to utter and absolute despair."

Then, again, the most hopeful of us cannot deny that vice triumphs in London in a way that is a disgrace to civilisation, and that, although we can say little about it, there are demons in human form who are making a large and lucrative profit out of the ruin of their fellow-creatures. Moreover, the chief difficulty we find in carrying on the rescue work of London is the apathy of the ordinary Londoner, who wishes to turn a deaf ear to such an unpleasant subject, and who does not really believe in the efforts of the few who are trying to do something to free the white

slaves in London, and to break down those haunts of vice which entirely occupy some of our streets to-day.

If, then, it can be demonstrated that we need in the reform of London a robust faith, the second question is, "Upon what is that faith to be grounded?" The first thing in which we must believe as reformers of London is human nature. Do not believe for one moment that those stories which you read in the papers—true stories in themselves, no doubt—represent the whole state of things in the slums of London. You ought to trust far more those of us who have passed up and down those slums every night, who know them from one end to the other, and to take hope from the fact that those who know them best are most hopeful about them. We find that boys and girls, men and women, given a chance, will take the chance; that boys who would otherwise become what are miscalled "Hooligans" may be found contentedly playing, night after night, in some boys' club; that the parts of London which have effective boys' clubs never produce those Hooligan gangs at all; that hundreds of girls (under the training of ladies who unobtrusively come night after night to this most Christlike

work) are growing, even in the poorest districts, truly Christian in their minds, and thoughts, and ways; that the working-man, once given somewhere else to go to, does not wish to spend every night drinking in a public-house, but rejoices at the chance given him of spending a profitable evening in some large temperance club. There, in the poorest districts, we find homes which would be an example to the highest in the land, and little children safeguarded by their parents and by the grace of God to grow up pure and true and innocent through all the misery and shame around them; and finding this, our faith in human nature is restored. God did not make men evil Himself. When God made everything, He looked, and behold, it was very good. And if we are to take part in the work of God, we have to restore back to these children of God the image which not God has destroyed, but the devil and the carelessness of man.

Secondly, we have to believe in the power of the co-operation of good men. I hold here a letter, signed by the Bishops on each side of the river, by the heads of the Wesleyan community and of the Congregationalists, and by the Chief Rabbi of the Jews. They have put out

a joint letter, in which they say, "The government of London affords an opportunity of wise administration which may powerfully influence for good the conditions of social life. We feel that the diligent administration of existing laws might abate many evils, and raise the level of effort for the common good. It all depends upon the spirit in which these laws are administered." The other day, from one platform, there were speaking, at a meeting in connection with the social evil, the Bishop of London, the Chief Rabbi, a Roman Catholic Bishop, and the heads of the Nonconformist communities. The very fact that these men were gathered together as one force is a hopeful sign of the future. It is the co-operation of right-thinking men which has produced the reforms in the past. We must believe more and more in concentrating together all the good thought and good feeling of every denomination in the great city of London, fanning it into a white heat of earnest effort, and so purging away the reproach which rests upon us to-day.

Thirdly, behind it all, we must believe in God—we must believe that God cares about this city. I do not think it would be possible to go on for a month, breasting day after day the terrible evils

of London, if one did not believe that God knows by name every child in London; that He cares—that it is to Him a matter of the most personal concern—whether that little child in the slum is brought up properly or not; and that He is with us to give power to all we do, and inspire all we say in His name. We may in His name rescue, at least, the children for His sake; and no believer in the Incarnation can doubt for a moment the love and care of God. If we really believe that inasmuch as we do it to the least of these His brethren we do it to Christ; if we really believe that He is in the girl and in the boy, and that those who touch them touch Him, there can be no hopelessness in the work of reform throughout London. These are His people—His own, part of Himself! The Incarnation gives us hope.

What, then, are we to do? The question comes very near us to-day, for on Thursday next the new boroughs are to elect their representatives. Everyone must realise what a chance has been given to us here. These new Councillors will assess and collect the poor rate, and the rate for lighting and draining; they will have power to destroy houses which they pronounce unfit for habitation,

buildings dangerous to the public health, and areas which are overcrowded; they will appoint the sanitary officials and inspectors, and administer all the sanitary regulations and the demands of the Factory Acts in domestic workshops; they will have power to build such hospitals as they think fit, and they alone can adopt the Acts for public libraries and baths and washhouses. They will control the condition and the cleansing of the streets; they will be responsible for the suppression of disorderly houses, and the protection of public decency—in a word, the social and moral life of London will be to a great extent in their hands. The State has framed this machinery, but the Church must put the moral aspect of it forward—the Church must fill it with the true spirit. These twenty-eight boroughs will be perfectly useless in the attempt to reform London unless they are inspired from the very start by the sympathy of enthusiastic and Christian people.

What, then, are we to do with regard to them?

First, let us be certain that we ourselves are clear from any possible condemnation. It is surprising, when we at last find out, behind all the agents, and all the intermediaries, who are the owners of much small property in London,

to discover that they are not uncommonly most respectable and nominally Christian people. My friends—if I am speaking to anyone who owns such property—remember that no agents, and no subletting, takes away your responsibility in the eyes of God; it is on your skirts that the blood of the children will be at the last day, if you have not taken every possible precaution and used every conceivable thoughtfulness and care so that the property which brings you in your money may be administered as a matter which very closely concerns the honour of a child of God.

Secondly, we can, some of us, volunteer to serve on these new Councils ourselves. I know that this will involve a sacrifice of many things to the men who serve on them—a sacrifice of leisure, perhaps of some of our finer feelings—but I put it to you, Is it not a sacrifice which ought to be willingly made in so great a cause? Everything is accomplished by sacrifice, and you are the men who ought to come forward and take upon you that sacrifice for the sake of Christ.

Thirdly, we who are voters should resolve to-day that none, whether of our political party or not, shall be sent to represent us on those Council Boards who have any personal interest to safe-

guard there. The weakness of the past has been that sometimes men have found a place upon the Boards which regulated local matters whose sole object was to see that their own interests were not touched. Every man—and you owe it to God—every man whom you send to your Local Board should have a clean hand and a pure heart.

Fourthly, we can speak well of these Council Boards. After all, people usually live up to what we expect of them; and if we show no interest in our new Councillors and their work, if we fail to make them realise that their labours will be recognised by their fellow-citizens, if we do not let them feel that we look on their work as a great work, then this effort towards reform will degenerate to the level of our thought about it.

Brethren, two kinds of life are necessary in the world:

"There are some hearts like wells, green-moss'd and deep
As ever summer saw,
And cool their water is—yea, cool and sweet,
But you must come to draw.

"They hoard not, yet they rest in calm content,
And not unsought will give;
They can be quiet with their wealth unspent,
So self-contained they live.

"But there are some like springs that, bubbling, burst
To follow dusty ways,
And run with offer'd cup to quench his thirst,
Where the tired traveller strays.

"That never ask the meadows if they want
What is their joy to give,
Unask'd their lives to other life they grant
So self-bestow'd they live."

We want both lives in London; we want the calm, self-contained life like Jacob's Well, but we want more to-day the living water which springs from a faith in Jesus Christ. You who for years have been accumulating knowledge, who have experience of affairs, who are educated men—the time is now come for you to give to London a share of the resources which you have accumulated for her benefit, that so it may be said of London: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall rejoice for thee, and the desert rejoice and blossom as a rose. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

The Elements of Christian Joy

I

A GOOD CONSCIENCE

"The answer of a good conscience."—1 Pet. iii. 21.

IN the course of the Christmas festival, on one of those days when, at St. Paul's, we have a few moments' meditation after the afternoon service, this question was propounded: "Is it possible, in the midst of the troubles and anxieties of life, to have a joy which no man can take from us?" It seemed promised to us in the words, "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." "These things have I written unto you, that your joy may be full." "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice." But the question which weighed then upon our minds was, Is it possible? Is this promise a reality, or is it a dream? And during the few moments then available we

answered the question from life. We pictured from life a scene on Christmas Day, when a poor woman, full of pain and full of suffering, was seen lying in a little room in East London, after her Christmas communion, full of a joy which the world could neither give nor take away. We watched a blind man who, as his little daughter sang him the hymn of the Holy Innocents, was filled with a joy which shone through his face, and which was not of earth; and we heard the words which a young officer wrote on his tablets before the cancer choked him: "These have been the happiest months I ever spent in my life." But it is quite obvious that if that question is worth answering at all, it is worth answering at far greater length. If there is such a thing as a joy which no man can take from us, it is the greatest discovery ever made on earth—the greatest revelation from God to man. This must be the water of which everyone who is thirsty is to come and drink. During this month, then, on each of the Sundays, we will try to discover, one by one, what are the ingredients of this marvellous gift—this joy no man can take from us. Few will deny that it is an appropriate time for such investigation. Some of you may have

read* this pathetic little poem, which I think catches the tone—or, rather, one tone—of the nation's feeling to-day, and describes with few words of very great depth the sorrow and mourning now in many homes:

"O bitter wind towards the sunset blowing,
What of the dales to-night?
In yonder gray old hall what fires are glowing,
What ring of festal light?
In the great window as the day was dwindling
I saw an old man stand,
His head was proudly held and his eyes kindling,
But the list shook in his hand—
O wind of twilight, was there no word uttered,
No sound of joy or wail?
"A great fight and a good death," he muttered.
"Trust him, he would not fail."
What of the chamber dark where she was lying,
For whom all life is done,
Within her heart she rocks a dead child, crying,
"My son, my little son."

Yes, we may well, at a time of mourning, set ourselves to ask the secret of the joy which nothing can take from us.

And first in the investigation we have to take note of a marvellous faculty, instinctive in human nature, which we have learned to call conscience, and having called it conscience have often dismissed out of our minds; a faculty which is recognised

* By Henry Newbolt, *Spectator*, January 27, 1900.

by everyone, however they may explain it; a faculty which enables us to know the difference between right and wrong, as the eye knows the difference between black and white. Much ingenuity has been spent in the effort to find a plausible explanation of conscience; and some have tried to account for it by a theory of evolution, as though it were the inherited impression of a necessary connection between certain acts and their punishment; the combined result of the law of association and the law of heredity. But, after all, the thing which comes home to us is not any explanation, however plausible, of conscience, but the fact of conscience itself? Every one of us knows that conscience exists. You and I are fortunate if at some time or other in our life it has not lashed us with its scourges, and one of the things which makes it impossible for us to think that conscience is merely evolved from some historical connection between acts and punishment is the way in which conscience drives and stings a man to go against his interests and against his inclination; the way in which it utters what a great philosopher has called "its categorical imperative."

There were two little girls this week from the

City who crept in during the dinner-hour to ask me whether I thought they had sinned against the Holy Ghost. It was very touching to see these quite young girls oppressed by the thought of the sin against the Holy Ghost. It is a very common terror among the poor. What is the answer? Why, that while conscience exists and while conscience is alive, you cannot have sinned against the Holy Ghost; you cannot have sinned the unforgivable sin, because the unforgivable sin is to call evil good and good evil—to say, "Evil, be thou my good," and it is only a man or woman in whom conscience has ceased to act who can ever sin against the Holy Ghost. I say, then, conscience exists; that it is the first point of which we can make sure.

And the second point which we must note is that conscience, although it is a gift of God to man, must, like all gifts, be educated and enlightened. There are some who seem to think that when they have done a thing conscientiously the question is over. It is not over at all. The question is, Ought they to have done that thing, however conscientiously? Has the conscience entrusted to them by God been sufficiently enlightened with all the light which is possible for them in

order to make it act as God would have it act? We read in the Old Testament those strange stories of Jael and Joshua. We read how Jael used hospitality in order to betray and murder the enemy of her country. We see how Joshua, the brave, courageous soldier, ruthlessly put to death women and children. And the only explanation, as Dr. Mozley pointed out years ago, lies in the gradual enlightenment of conscience which has been given to us since these deeds were done. God can only get out of each age the morality of which that age is capable, and when we see the imperfect morality of the Old Testament, we see a half-enlightened, half-trained and half-educated conscience. Does not this help us to understand why those gallant foes of ours in South Africa, so brave, so kind to our wounded in nearly every case, have for years past, according to the testimony of missionaries, been so cruel to the natives of Africa? I believe it is to be explained, as these missionaries explain it, by the fact that their religion, which is mainly an Old Testament religion, produces an Old Testament morality, and that, as the noble missionary John Mackenzie, who laboured in that district up to 1880, says, "the Boers have persuaded themselves, by some

mental process, that they are God's chosen people, and the blacks are the wicked and condemned Canaanites. That is why they shoot them down like vermin." It is right for us to try and understand these things, that we may in our consciences and hearts take a fair view of everything. I throw out to you this afternoon, as a thing which may help us in our desire to take a sober, Christian view of our foes, that Old Testament religion produces in every age Old Testament morality.

But be that as it may. To return to our own selves, we must bear in mind that if we are to gain this first essential element of Christian joy, the answer of a good conscience, we have to use every possible means in our power to keep our consciences enlightened. Some of you may have read a romance which has had in these last months a large circulation. In that book there is pictured a clergyman who may provide every clergyman who reads it a standing self-examination. He is a good man, who attends to every Church rule, who performs his religious duties with exemplary carefulness, who is most assiduous in his parish visiting, who is most regular at his early celebrations. And yet it is sketched quite naturally in the book how he is led up to do one of the most

dastardly, cowardly, mistaken things which it is possible for a man to do. He reads a book in manuscript which was not intended for him to see, and which he had been asked not to look at, and then because he does not approve of it he burns it without the consent of the author. Now, such a story as that may well bring home to us this question: *Have* class prejudices, professional prejudices, the ways of thinking in our own little special clique —even though it is a religious clique—blinded and dulled the honest, faithful, straightforward dictates of conscience, which ought to be our guide in the actions of life? We are told, and I believe truly told, that it is possible for the compass of a ship to be entirely deranged at times by the iron which the ship contains, or even by the attraction of neighbouring rocks. But if that is a possibility in the steering of a ship, does not the experience of life tell us it is a terrible possibility in the steering of souls, and that hundreds of souls are wrecked because they have not taken the trouble with care and patience and accuracy and self-examination to keep the needle of their conscience ever true to the kindred points of heaven and home?

Do I not carry you with me this afternoon when I say that this conscience can be, and ought

to be, enlightened and educated with care, because it holds in its hands the secret of joy? Have you ever been set to bear a sorrow which the world might call a big sorrow, only that it had no shame in it? Was it not true that when you had to bear such a sorrow as that, the Father threw round you the everlasting arms, and the Son was there in the midst of it with you, and God the Holy Ghost poured His comfort upon you, and the holy angels moved round you from heaven perpetually every moment, so that you found the burden grow lighter every day? And, on the contrary, you may have known what it is to have something—a little thing, maybe—upon the conscience. Did it not sting and poison every moment while it was there? Did it not have a pain and poison and misery about it in comparison with which the sorrow and the pain of the big sorrow was nothing? If that is true—and I ask if it is not true—then what did you discover? That on the conscience as the substratum of everything else depends the presence of joy. We have, therefore, arrived at this first, elementary beginning of the joy which no man taketh from us. It is the answer of a good conscience.

Secondly, then, have we got it? That sounds

a simple question, but have we got it? Many of you spend your time every day in this City. Have you the answer of a good conscience with regard to your City and business life? I often think, and have, perhaps, spoken here, of the Bethnal Green workman who found that his business in this City brought about a keen antagonism between his conscience and his interests. He was a man devoted to temperance, but his time and skill were given to designing advertisements for public-houses. He sacrificed his interests to his conscience, and gave up his work, for which he was receiving £4 a week. The story may, at any rate, illustrate this question, Is there in your business to-day anything inconsistent with the answer of a good conscience?

Or, again, there are some who complain that they have no joy or happiness in their homes. Whose fault is it? Have you the answer of a good conscience, or is it your temper which is at the bottom of the unhappiness of your home? It is so easy to blame everyone else; it is so easy to say, "If only So-and-So were but different." I put this to you as one of the thoughts which I would leave with you: Can I, with regard to my home, give the answer of a good conscience?

A Good Conscience

Before we close we must ask that same question of the nation. Has the nation at this moment any answer to its thousand critics? and is it the answer of a good conscience? And as we try honestly to answer that question, we notice throughout the nation to-day, in the midst of all the anxiety and sorrow, the presence of a strange thing we have not observed before: we notice distinctly a deep current of joy. Ask first the mourners, and I believe they would answer as the great Ruskin answered at the time of the Crimean War:

"I will appeal at once," he says, "to the testimony of those whom the war has cost the dearest. I ask *their* witness to whom the war has changed the aspect of the earth and imagery of heaven, whose hopes it has cut off like a spider's web, whose treasure it has placed, in a moment, under the seals of clay—those who can never more see the sun rise nor watch the climbing light gild the eastern clouds without thinking what graves it has gilded first, far down behind the dark earth-line, who never more shall see the crocus bloom in spring without thinking what dust it is that feeds the wildflowers of Balaclava. Ask *their* witness, and see if they will

not reply that it is well with them and with theirs; that they would have it no otherwise—would not, if they might, receive back their gifts of love and life, nor take again the purple of their blood out of the cross on the breastplate of England."

They would give the same answer to-day. Look at the volunteers who were a few days ago crowding this cathedral before starting for South Africa. Is it not true that through their young hearts there is spreading something they had not known before, something far beyond a man's mere love of fighting? I believe there is; I believe that many of these men are tasting now, perhaps for the first time, the joy of sacrifice, and it is uplifting them to a height which they have not known before. They feel the joy of being called as a labour of love from their desks and offices to volunteer for the honour of their country. Then, again, is it not true that as a nation we are feeling the joy of fighting for a great ideal? I know full well that some of the nation may have tainted motives. This is no place to enter into a question of politics, but this we may surely say, that as a people the English are not wishing to make mere gain of all

this warfare; that, with a perfectly honest conscience, we are battling for what we believe to be a question of freedom. Our forefathers fought for freedom, and we and our brothers from distant colonies, who agree with our ideal, are fighting for the freedom we have fought for before.

But if the presence of this joy points to a good conscience, what is it that mars our joy? Why is it that with not quite steady hand we grasp our sword? Why is it that with not quite steady gaze we can look the whole world in the face? It is because of the national sins that we have on our conscience. The only stains that are upon our joy are the stains upon our conscience. If we had always been spotless with regard to the liquor traffic among native races, if there had been no national swagger, if we had always considered our Imperial position as a most sacred trust for the good of the world, then with a more perfect confidence should we appeal, as we shall appeal next Sunday, to the God of Battles. Let us use the week as it should be used, to prepare for the intercession. God will be merciful, we do believe. He has given us this glorious mission. But we must be purified. He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. The troubles of the past

month may be the purging fires. Let us ask to be purified for our high condition, resolve to put away the evil of our doing from before His eyes, and beseech Him that in the glorious work He has called us to forward we may give the answer of a good conscience. Then our joy will be full.

II

CHILDLIKE TRUST

"And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed."—Exod. xvii. 11.

FEW methods of winning a battle can have seemed more useless at first sight than the method adopted by Moses. The Red Sea was crossed, and the great crisis was over, but the first pitched battle was at hand, for Amalek, not unnaturally, had come out to defend its own borders against this invading host. Everything depended on the result of this first engagement. The undisciplined multitude had already begun to murmur because of the hardships of the way; a defeat would be certain to discourage them; it might well have been expected therefore that, however much he might have entrusted the actual fighting to the younger Joshua, Moses would stand in the

thick of his men to cheer them on by his presence and example to a victory on which depended, under God, all their hopes and all their great mission to the world. And yet it was in this supreme moment that Moses chose to retire, with two other leaders, to the top of the hill high above the battle, waiting there with the rod of God in his hand. It might have been argued that this was not only inconsistent with his position as leader, but absolutely useless, since, whatever he might do on the top of the mountain, the battle would be decided by force of arms in the plain below; and it might with some plausibility have been added that since the Amalekites were on their own ground, in their own country, the prayers for success, which they were doubtless offering, had at least as good a right to be heard. But, nevertheless, the fact remains—"Behold, when Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun."

Ages have passed since then, but the difficulties connected with intercession, and especially intercession for a war, remain much the same as ever.

1. In the first place, it seems so useless. We can see the use of more guns ; we can appreciate the power of mobile forces ; we can calculate the importance of possessing the best weapons ; but to stand far away from the battle, and just lift up our hands, seems such a useless proceeding compared with fighting, and to require an almost superhuman faith to suppose that it can do any good at all.

2. So, again, it may be argued that it is, at any rate, inconsistent to fight as well as pray. Either fight, and acknowledge frankly that Providence is on the side of the strongest battalions, as Napoleon said ; or pray and leave it to God, in the face of any odds, to assert the righteousness of a righteous cause.

3. And, thirdly, the objection that both sides are praying applies with tenfold force to a war like the present one, when both sides believe in the same Christ, assert conscientiously the righteousness of their cause, and appeal to the same God to help them

I. First, then, on what grounds do we believe that intercession is anything but useless? We may frankly admit that there is no article of faith more entirely dependent on direct revelation. We may prepare the way, indeed, for belief in it if we note how in ordinary life we are left in one another's care, and are allowed an immense influence over the happiness of others; we may be influenced by the argument that if the sins of the fathers are visited on the children, then it is only fair that the goodness and the prayers of those fathers and mothers shall be visited on the children too; but, when all is said and done, our real belief in intercession rests on direct revelation. The revelation to us, however, is very clear. We find that this passage is only one of many. Abraham prays for Sodom, and at last is told that if ten righteous are found there, the city shall be spared. Aaron "runs in between the living and the dead" and the plague is stayed. Our Lord's command is, "Pray ye the Lord of the Harvest, that He may send forth labourers unto His harvest." Prayer is made by the Church for St. Peter in prison, and he is freed. St. Paul says, "Strive together in your prayers for me." St. John declares that "if any man see his brother sin a

sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and God shall give him life for them which sin not unto death." Christians are called "kings and priests unto God," and we are told that the intercessions of Christians are gathered into the intercession of Christ, so that in His name they have power before the mercy-seat of God. In fact, it would scarcely be too much to say that Christianity must answer with its life for the truth or falsehood of such promises as these. Prayer is a revelation, if anything is a revelation at all.

Nor are we without direct warning with regard to the delay in any apparent result. We must not forget the importunate widow or the begging friend. Could Christ possibly have meant that God the Father was like a heartless judge, a selfish friend? No, His aim was to teach us how long might have to be the importunity of successful intercession. The argument is this: If an unjust judge or selfish friend is melted by the importunity of those who cry, how much more shall a perfectly loving and just God as He is grant as speedily as it is possible the request which His righteousness and love desire to grant to the trustful prayer of His child? Nevertheless, His answer may not be fully revealed at once. All

that we can see of the great battlefield is a very small part of the whole.

> "If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
> It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
> Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
> And but for you possess the field."

We may take it, then, as proved from the Bible that, uncertain as it may seem at first, a real revelation is given from God as to the power of "God's remembrancers" to move the world by their prayers.

II. But this brings us face to face with the second difficulty—Why fight as well as pray? And it is as well to ask the question in this blunt, straightforward way, because it compels us to consider what we mean by praying at all. There is one most common and extraordinary misconception about prayer and intercession, in which it is supposed that by our prayers we seek to alter the will of God. Just imagine for a moment the demoralising nature of such a belief. Let us state it in its barest terms: "There is something really bad for the nation and bad for the world at large, but we think it is good; God has planned not to give it to the world, but, because we ask it, He will change His mind." I say such a belief

is demoralising, because it would deprive us of all confidence in a righteous God. If God really were of such a character, who could trust Him any more? If He really, to suit our whim, were ready to alter His will, He would be like one of those foolish fathers who, lacking the firmness to train their children's characters, simply give them anything they ask. It is not too much to say that nothing would be more appalling than such a conception of God as would lead us to believe that we have at the centre of the universe a weak, good-natured Despot, too careless of justice to say No.

What, then, is the object of prayer and intercession, if not to alter the will of God?

The precise reverse—to *work with* the will of God, to act as the condition of its action, to smooth the path for its actual working. We are told that on one occasion our Lord Jesus Christ could do no mighty works, because of unbelief. His will was strong to do them, His love was strong, but there was no energy of the people working with Him, no responsive working of their wills, and so the kingdom of healing and grace could not be revealed. And the same thing comes true in our experience. Just as we work with God by sowing and reaping to

receive the gift of bread, and by digging and mining to receive the gift of gold, and by reading and studying to receive the gift of knowledge, so we work with Him by the double action of praying and fighting to accelerate the gift of righteous government, which He desires to extend throughout the world.

III. But it is only too obvious that even now we are still left with our last and greatest difficulty unanswered. "Yes," someone may say, "but you are begging the question—what if the one side are praying quite as earnestly as the other? How can both be answered?"

They can be answered in one way, and in one way alone, and that is by the victory of right. The true answer to our prayer is a judgment of God between us and our enemies. If we are wrong, if our cause, however conscientiously undertaken, is an unrighteous cause, then there is no calamity which could happen to our country greater than that we should win the victory in this war; to triumph in unrighteousness is the punishment of devils, and the worst and most awful sentence in the Bible is, "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone." If we are wrong, then the only chance for England is a

crushing humiliation, which may cure her of her folly, and may open her eyes to the egotism which has mistaken a thirst for empire for a mission from God, and an invasion of right for a fight for freedom. But if, as most of us humbly trust and believe, we are fighting in a righteous cause, then defeat is what is best for our gallant enemies; it is the true answer to their prayers as well as ours. Both appeal for the ultimate decision to the God whose righteousness standeth like the strong mountain, whose judgments are like the great deep; both are confident in the righteousness of the cause for which they fight; both pray, if they pray as Christians, not for their country, right or wrong, but for their country, that righteousness may come home to her; for it is certain that by the inherent righteousness of her cause she will be justified, or by its inherent injustice she will be condemned.

If all this, then, is true, our conclusion must be that we are justified on every ground of revelation and reason in going up with Moses, Aaron, and Hur into the mountain, and holding up our hands in prayer above the battle; but the question remains, how are we to do it?

1. First, we answer, with childlike faith.

That hymn which may be called a song of the Holy Innocents gives the prevailing spirit of intercession:

> "O give me Samuel's mind,
> A sweet unmurmuring faith,
> Obedient and resigned
> To Thee in life and death—
> That I may read with childlike eyes
> Things that are hidden from the wise."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

2. And, next, we are to pray with *patient perseverance.*

It is a touching picture, this of Moses: "His hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." Intercession is a work of patience and time.

3. Also, we are to work while we pray; the

prayer "Thy kingdom come" implies that we must do our best to make it come.

In Mr. Watts' famous picture Sir Galahad stands by his horse, and his head is bowed in prayer; but he is fully armed, and the horse is ready for service by his side.

The man of prayer is also the man of action; he is above the battle in his times of intercession; he is in the thick of the battle in his times of work; he has his face raised in childlike faith, but he is armed and ready.

> "This is the happy warrior; this is he
> Whom every man in arms should wish to be."

We spoke of the first essential of Christian joy as "the answer of a good conscience." The second is the trust of a childlike heart.

III

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts xvi. 30, 31.

WE are seeking to discover the elements of a joy which no man can take from us, and have already discovered two—first, the answer of a good conscience, and, secondly, the trust of a childlike heart.

What is the third? The third essential element of an unassailable joy begins to appear when we ask ourselves at what point the happiness of a man would break down if all he knew were that to be happy he must have a good conscience and a faith in God. Such happiness would break down in the impossible effort, first of all, to keep that conscience good in the midst of a staining and corrupting world, and, next, to maintain that

faith in God clear and strong in the face of the crushing sorrows and inequalities of life.

I. Picture a man honestly starting with the firm conviction that a good conscience is essential to happiness. He finds himself hampered both by the past and by the present.

1. He is hampered by the *past.* He is trying to become a better man; but the more his conscience is enlightened by the light, the more heinous appear the lapses of his boyhood or his youth. He may have done this thing or that thing ignorantly or in unbelief, but he sees now that he ought to have known better, and he cannot undo what he did. The friend he injured is gone to another world now; the mother he neglected lies cold in her grave; the boy he misled has become a bitter cynic. It was all done in the days when he had given up prayer, and had drifted with the tide; but there it all is, hanging round his neck like a millstone, and it robs him of his joy. More and more the thought returns to him, "If I could only get rid of the past, if I could only turn the page and start again, it would be well with me; but whatever I do now, there will always be the record of those years against me at the Judgment Day."

2. And, again, it is not only the past which hampers him, but also the present. He starts the week with a clear resolve: not to lose his temper; to be strictly honourable in his dealings; to keep his thoughts from dwelling on what is wrong; to preserve his conscience void of offence. But what happens? Some quite unexpected thing puts him out; he has lost his temper before he knew what he was doing; he is weak at the crucial moment, and so is involved in some doubtful transaction; more and more he becomes conscious that there are within him two contending powers—one might almost say two contending *selves*. It is not merely a question of getting rid of the past; it is a question of keeping a good conscience in the present. In a multiplicity of ways his experience is exactly the experience of St. Paul: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. vii. 19-23).

II. But if the preservation of an unsullied conscience seems impossible, it is no easier to maintain the childlike faith. All goes well in the early years—"Heaven lies about us in our infancy"—no troubles happen to us, no sorrows darken the horizon; but then quite suddenly, perhaps, the little sister dies, and it awakes our question with a sudden shock; or we are married, and the wife dies in the first year; or the boys have gone to the front, and now there is

> "One of them shot by the sea in the East,
> And one of them shot in the West by the sea";

or a sudden panic occurs in the business world and we find ourselves penniless, and the children, whom we brought up so carefully, have scarcely bread to eat; or we lie with broken limbs and decayed constitution, looking up into the face of a Heaven which makes no reply and gives no explanation. I am not inventing these things, I have seen each one of them happen within the last two years, and it is when some such stress comes upon us that childlike faith in God—so real an ingredient of the cup of joy—ceases to be easy. "After all," we ask, "how do we learn that this overruling providence of God exists at all? What

proof have we that anyone is taking care of us or our children? We seem rather the sport of some malignant chance, the shuttlecock of some evil spirits, who amuse themselves with our misery. How do we know that there is any light when we seem to be dwelling in the land of the shadow of death?"

So the third great element which is necessary for a true and lasting joy begins to dawn upon us. We need to be "saved"—to be saved from endless remorse for irremediable sin; to be saved from a hopeless struggle with an evil nature too strong to conquer; to be saved from the morbid pessimism of those to whom death is the end of life, and chance its only providence. That word "salvation" clearly meant something to the poor gaoler as he sprang trembling into the gloom of the prison at Philippi, however little he understood the fulness of what he was seeking; it was indeed a momentous question when he asked, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?"

The answer, alike to the gaoler's question and our need, is one of the best known and, we must also admit, most misquoted verses in the New Testament—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This great answer has,

indeed, been sadly misused. It has been quoted sometimes in disparagement of great realities. "Believe, believe!" shouts some ignorant revivalist as he preaches under the archway to the passers-by. "Never mind about works, or Sacraments, or Church; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Or, again, the word may be used so as to be sadly unintelligible: "Are you saved?" asks the fellow-traveller as he leans across the railway-carriage. "'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be *saved*.'" But there are at least four senses in which the word "saved" occurs in the New Testament, and the question may, only too possibly, confuse and distress the mind of the ignorant. But, putting aside all extravagant uses of this beautiful answer which ignore the obvious fact that the answer of St. Paul cannot be divorced from the theology of St. Paul, and that in the very next verse an explanation follows which led to the gaoler's immediate baptism, the great thing which matters is for us to know in what sense it is true that to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is to be saved from the evils which spoil our joy.

1. First, to be saved by Christ means that He brings in His hand to the penitent soul a pardon

signed and sealed for the offences of the past. It may be admitted at once that no one understands the full meaning of the Atonement, and that no genius has as yet been able to construct a theory which leaves no difficulty to the thoughtful mind. Nevertheless, thank God! we receive our pardon not from any theory of the Atonement, but by reason of the fact of it; and even if no other statement had been made by the Saviour when He came, this should have been enough—"The Son of Man is come to give His life for many," for the sins of the whole world. Those who feel puzzled about the Atonement might well read Dr. Dale's book on the Atonement, and they will more clearly afterwards understand how the Being to Whom was committed the judgment of the world first made Himself absolutely one with the world, and so was able to lay aside His judgment robes, to kneel Himself in the place of the sinner and receive in His own person the punishment for sin. It is not unknown even now in the army that if a regiment has a good name at the inspection, those in cells are released; they are redeemed by the good name of the regiment; and there is nothing immoral, but rather something very glorious, in the teaching that for the good name

of the Son of Man the sins of men are forgiven, and that if we confess our sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we may be saved from the worst nightmare of the human race—the nightmare of unforgiven sins. Are there any here who have not yet understood these things, who have believed in the Saviour but not confessed their sins, or have admitted their sins but not believed in the power of the blood of Christ to wash them away? Then, as earnestly as any revivalist preacher, would I urge on you this afternoon what some call the Gospel, but what really is the beginning of the Gospel—"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin"; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

2. But, secondly, belief in our Lord Jesus Christ admits us into a fresh power of life. Why do I say that Christ's pardon of sin is only the beginning of His Gospel? For this simple reason, that if it was also the end, there would be nothing to relieve us of that other most fatal obstacle to Christian joy—the inequality of the struggle against our besetting sins.

What shocks the consciences of men is a Gospel which has become a mere shibboleth,

the mere repeating of a formula which leaves no impression on the life; whereas the full Gospel tells us that we are not only saved from the guilt of sin by the death of Christ, but saved from its power by His life. Heaven is not full of merely pardoned felons, but of holy saints, and we become holy by the life of Christ within us. It is possible in logic to separate the processes of justification and sanctification, but not in life; here in a living world the converted man is also the changed man; to accept in any real and true sense salvation by the death of Christ is to set ourselves definitely and actually under the gradual process of salvation by His life—the life of Christ Himself reproduced in the soul of man, and driving out all evil before it. This, at least, is the central truth of the Gospel which St. Paul preached when he taught the gaoler, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Moreover, this communion with the very self of Jesus is secured to us by certain clear and definite means. Our faith is not utterly independent of outward acts.

And it is here especially that St. Paul must explain St. Paul. We cannot mistake his mean-

ing unless we come to him with a preconceived theory of what he ought to teach. What he does actually teach is this:

(*a*) "We are all the children of God, by the faith in Jesus Christ, for as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Baptism was, then, to St. Paul a part of the whole process of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. He must have remembered (how could he be likely to forget?) the words of Ananias spoken above him as he lay blind and humbled to the dust: "Why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

(*b*) So again: "Stir up into flame the gift of God, which is in thee by the laying on of hands."

Why this mention of the laying on of hands, if Confirmation were not another act which showed true believing on the Lord Jesus Christ?

(*c*) And as for the indwelling of Christ in the soul, as the source of growing purity and power, it is always associated in St. Paul with the taking of the "bread and wine," of which he says: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? the cup which we drink, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?"

Do I speak this afternoon to baptized, confirmed, and communicant Christians? If not, then I speak to those who have imperfectly apprehended what it is to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," who have not yet understood that perfect trust means perfect obedience, and perfect obedience alone insures perfect joy. And, if there is any man here who desires to take the greatest step within his power towards a real Christian joy, I would bid him, having first looked into the matter, come forward and receive the baptism which has been delayed, possibly, for years through misunderstanding; let him come forward and receive what the Bible calls the "fulness of the Holy Ghost" in the laying on of hands; let him determine to abide in Christ, and to have Christ abide in him, in the Sacrament which Christ our Master chose and ordained as His own appointed means of union with Himself.

3. Once again a living faith in Jesus Christ lights up the valley of the shadow of death, and dissipates the pessimism of the man who seems to see everything lying under the dominion of ruthless chance. Do we ask how this great moral miracle comes to pass? Simply because Christ Himself is to the faithful as a great rock in

a weary land. If Christ really did die and rise again, then on the cross He has given us a demonstration of love, and in His rising from the dead a demonstration of power, to which we are to turn and turn again—to which we are to come back, as to the shadow of a great rock, through all the woes and anxieties and fears of a chequered life. Those who have tried it know that it is no empty promise, but a most true promise literally fulfilled.

"Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Can we then take for ourselves this third great element of Christian joy this afternoon? Why not? He stands here among us, still the same as ever, the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes—to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile, the very form of God unto salvation for all of us. His blood still avails to cleanse the conscience from the past; His life still flows through the means of grace, obediently and faithfully used, to strengthen the soul in its struggles in the present, and He still stands *Christus consolator*—the consoler of the world.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved"—saved from remorse here and

shame hereafter, from defeat in temptation, despair in trouble, and terror in death.

You have already the shield of faith and the breastplate of righteousness; add to your armour the helmet of salvation, and your joy shall be full.

IV

FREEDOM OF SERVICE

"I am among you as he that serveth."—St. Luke xxii. 27.

IN the last address we faced the question as to what can save us from remorse for the past, defeat in the present, and anxiety about the future, and we found that the secret is contained in that familiar verse, "What shall I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And we saw that in the most literal sense of the word we are saved from remorse, defeat, and despair by a lively faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to earth for the very purpose of our own deliverance. But now, if we would know the final element of a true and lasting joy, it remains for us to grasp not merely the fact, but the manner of His Coming.

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We can well imagine that the question of how God would come to earth, if He should come, is one that has stirred, and reasonably stirred, the imagination of men. We have in ancient mythology many suggestions as to how it might happen, if it happened at all. In all the different forms of mythological conception God is always represented as coming in some form or other of grandeur; and the Jews, we know, were looking forward to their great Coming-One as to some great king or general who should arise to free their nation and their country from the Roman oppression. But that when He did come He would come as a slave; that, being in the form of God, He would think it not a thing to be snatched at to be equal with God, but would make Himself of no reputation, would take upon Himself the form of a slave (do not be afraid of the literal word), and be found in the likeness of men—that was a thought which proved to be to the Jew an utter stumbling-block and to the Greek a foolishness. And yet that was the form in which He came, and it so happens that, as we watch the peculiar manner and the method of His coming, we shall find the fourth ingredient for which we are looking of the cup of joy which no man can take

from us. If we go into the world with this as a motto, "I am among you as he that serveth," we have found the last secret of permanent joy.

And that great revelation is made to us in three pictures, which, as a matter of fact, have changed entirely the ideal of a true life for men. And in order to get to the point of view from which we can see these things as they are, away from that Gospel-hardened state in which we find ourselves listening time after time to the most moving facts, yet utterly untouched by them, let us picture how these three scenes presented themselves to the watching, waiting band of angels who are, according to the literal translation of the passage in St. Peter,* ever "straining" to look into the extraordinary mystery and glories of the Incarnation.

The first scene which illustrates the manner in which Christ came rises before us when we remember how our Lord Jesus Christ, after supper, laid aside His upper garments, took a towel, and girded Himself, and went round and washed the feet of His disciples. Now, you and I have heard that story so often that it seems to us

* 1 St. Peter i. 12.

to be almost a matter of course. But the angels, when they saw that marvellous Being, their supreme Captain, Lord of the Heavenly Host, at whose whisper their legions would spring to service, kneeling at the feet of Judas, and washing the traitor's feet, must have thought this the climax of the extraordinary drama which they were watching, and which alters, whenever it is accepted, the ideals of men. We are expected to descend to the lowliest service, to be ready to live in the background, unnoticed by anyone; nay, even to do what the world calls the dirtiest work in the cause of Christ. That is what Christian service means, and this thought of it has been stamped in some measure upon the conscience of man.

Then comes the second, hardly less striking, scene. A toil-worn, patient, hard-worked, weary figure moving up and down the valleys of Palestine, set upon one thing only—doing good. "He went about doing good." Other men might have comfortable homes, but the Son of man had not where to lay His head; other men might have leisure, but He had no leisure so much as to eat; other men might reasonably take some measure of rest, but the message ringing in His ears from

morning to night was this: "Work while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." And as He passed from village to village He gave new significance to the motto, "I am among you as he that serveth." People had been kind-hearted, doubtless, before; the human instincts of family love have always asserted themselves; but when it became the ideal of the slave of Christ that he should ask himself from morning to night, "How much good can I do before night-time, and how many people can I help in these hours? How much sympathy can I bring to those who mourn? how many in danger can I warn in time? how many who are going wrong can I bring back?"—this was a perfectly new revelation to the world. But even in this life of constant service the climax was not reached until black against the sky there stood at last the Cross, and those watching angels saw the Being they loved so well make that last surrender of Himself for men. Even to them it was a revelation of what service meant, a revelation of service so utter and devoted that it has been stamped for ever upon the consciences of mankind. It has given an almost terrible meaning to the motto, "I am among you as he that serveth." "This

commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you."

Therefore the call is, Go on to the death. When He looks us in the face to-day and says, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"—in that question He reveals the full measure of the meaning of His own motto, "I am among you as he that serveth," and names the true spirit in which we must look upon our service.

And notice that through all these forms of service, our Lord displays a most subtle and beautiful joy. This is the revelation for which we have been searching Sunday after Sunday. In those first scenes of His early ministry we are told He rejoiced in spirit and looked up to heaven and said, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." As He went from sick-bed to sick-bed, one can almost see the deep-set joy in His eyes as He laid His hand now on this sufferer, now on that. They followed Him like a magnet, because they felt His love; they felt that He had joy in His life of service and in helping them.

And as for the Cross, it cannot be only that there was a joy after the pain was over. It would be lowering to think that He was only looking forward to rest from it afterwards. No, when it is said that "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross and despised the shame," surely this must have meant the joy of the Good Shepherd, the joy of self-sacrifice itself, which even on the Cross was like a cup put to His lips, refreshing Him and staying Him, and giving Him comfort and strength to the end. And therefore we reach by the certain process of marking the ideal life this secret for to-day. The fourth ingredient of the cup of joy is a life of service. Without it we may have a good conscience, a faith in God, a faith that Christ was the Son of God and died upon the Cross, and yet we shall fail to have a joy which no man can take from us.

And on this point may I not appeal to the experience of this mass of human souls as to whether in their own measure they cannot certify that service for others, however imperfect, brings joy? I would ask the young University man who has gone down to live in the midst of the poor whether he has ever known in all his

life such peculiar and subtle happiness as he has known during the months or years during which he has done it? Not one, but dozens of such men have looked up into my face and said, "We never knew, we had not the slightest idea until we served down here, what true happiness means." I will appeal to those from the West End who, in spite of the most attractive engagements and entertainments, yet keep to the visit which they have promised to some sick soul in the slums of our great City, as to whether those days consecrated faithfully to the service of others for Christ's sake are not the happiest which they know. The gratitude of the poor woman to whom they have gone to sing or read, has it not brought them a pleasure and joy not to be purchased by hours of enjoyment among their friends? And those of us whose blessed privilege it has been for years to labour day by day as ministers among the poor, know that there is nothing like it, there is no pleasure that ever can be received, no joy which it is possible to conceive, greater than that conferred by the look of gratitude from some sufferer whom we have tried to help;—the last grip of thanks from a dying man, the love of the little child whom one has been privileged to tend. At

the end of a long afternoon's visiting, however weary we may be, however imperfect the service may have been, there is the joy of service.

And therefore we are right to ask ourselves this question, Are we servants? If we are not, then we are not Christians. If we are not servants, why not? Is it because there is no field of service? Look first at the fields of service which the homes of England present. We do not value the service of those who come to our slums to the neglect of their own home work. The homes must be looked to first, and many a poor girl who would long to give her life in active devotion, but who is obliged by home duties to give her service there, is receiving a blessing in her faithful home service which she could not receive in any other way. And many a young man who has given up the prospect of marriage in order to keep a home for his mother is doing a glorious thing—exactly what Jesus Christ did Himself. He for thirty years lived and worked and kept His mother; and because the duty is so little thought of and so unknown it is all the more glorious. Then, again, comes the great field of service presented by the slums of our great City. In East London, in North London, and

quite as much in South London, we have a great field of service for the servants of Christ. Lately, on three distinct evenings in one week, I have seen three scenes, each of which gave a different form and variety to service. The first was a gathering of working-men got together by their fellow working-men and connected with a great men's service held every Sunday in a church in East London. I see here Sunday by Sunday bodies of working-men among those who form this congregation. I would ask them, Is there not a field of service among their brother men? Are not those who believe in Christ bound to band themselves together to bring Christ to others? It is the very object of the new Men's Society of the Church of England* (which has now taken its start, and is being worked so as to be a great religious movement among the men of England of all classes) that those who are faithful already should band themselves together and do missionary work among their fellows. "I am among you as he that serveth."

The next scene was a congregation completely

* Offices: Church House, Westminster; secretary, Rev. F. A. Pring.

filling one of the churches in the East London district. They were assembled to see and hear a parish priest instituted to their parish to take the place of one who, at the age of forty-four, had died at his post. The man who stepped into the breach is a man who will have in that parish nothing but hard work and the love of his people for his reward. And I put it to the young men in this church to-day who have means and leisure to dedicate themselves to the service of the Church whether it is creditable to the young men of England that there should be six or seven vacant curacies in East London to-day.

The third was a gathering of 400 or 500 people in another parish to welcome back the head of the parish after a long illness, and, moving up and down among them, the life and soul of the parish, were ladies from the West End of London who have come to live amongst those people, as they that serve, consecrating their gifts of tact and gentleness and culture in the cause of Christ and His people.

And so scene after scene comes back from one week's experience to illustrate how in the great mission-field of the Church there is an ample field for service.

But it would be indeed a narrow-minded view of the world to look upon that part of the field as the only one. What a field of service there is in the political and the municipal life of London! No man surely is serving Christ better than the man who in politics disregards his personal ambitions and looks farther than his party's watchwords, in order to dedicate himself, often utterly unthanked, to the cause of humanity. What a scope these new municipalities of London will give to the men of London! These municipalities will hold in their hands the life of the children, the health of the poor, the housing of the working classes. There could hardly be a greater sphere for service than that which these governing bodies will provide.

And as for those whose time for active service is over, either through ill-health or old age, and who feel that this call does not touch them, surely the words of Milton, as true as ever, are true of them to-day: "They also serve who only stand and wait." And so, my friends, as we watch again during Lent our Master going through every phase of His beautiful service to the death, let us take home this secret of joy—some form of service for others. With a good conscience and a

humble faith in God and trust in Jesus Christ, let us embark on a life of service, and whatever happens — adversity, trouble, ill-health, or any other trial that may fall upon us—we shall have the secret of joy which no man can take from us, "the light that never was on sea or land," a joy which the world can neither give nor take away.

Miscellaneous Addresses

I

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator."—1 PET. iv. 19.

"AS unto a faithful Creator."

Among all the different characteristics in the character of God—His strict and impartial justice, His abounding love, the consuming fire of His purity and energy—there is one which even more than all others gives us confidence in Him, the characteristic of faithfulness.

Think for a moment how much we value faithfulness among our friends on earth. "Faithful," we say, "are the wounds of a friend." If we are sure that our friend loves us, if we are certain that what he speaks is meant for our good, we can take anything from him, however painful, can receive from his hand the blow which he may feel he must give.

Or, see the faithfulness of a mother's love. Rizpah "took sackcloth and spread it for her upon the rock," and watched the dead bodies of her sons, and "suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night." But she is only an old-world type of that which is equally revealed under modern conditions—the faithfulness, the perfect faithfulness, of a mother's love, always ready on every emergency, at any moment, to be of service to all her children. Or, again, consider the faithfulness of two whom God has really joined together. They have a faithful courtship; they are faithful during the opening years of their married life. Through unromantic middle age they are still all in all to one another, and in old age you see them look across the table at one another with eyes whose meaning passes all describing. And when the time comes to face the dark valley, hand in hand, as it were, together they go down into the shadow, only to reappear together, as we firmly believe, in the land of light upon the farther side. Faithfulness is the most beautiful thing which we have on earth. How, then, does this most touching characteristic appear in God?

You will notice the special form in which

God's Faithfulness

St. Peter brings home his great conviction and appeal. In order to speak of faithfulness in God, especially as a faithful Creator, he might have taken the uniformity of Nature. What science calls the uniformity of Nature, faith calls the faithfulness of God. "While the earth remaineth, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, shall not cease." They do not cease, and the steadfastness of natural law is for us illuminated by the promise of God. Or he might have taken the faithfulness of God in history. When we study history one of the most striking things surely is that righteousness *does* exalt a nation; that virtue, after all, is infallibly at last self-rewarding, and vice infallibly self-debasing. And this, because God is faithful: "His righteousness standeth like a strong mountain; His judgments are like the great deep."

But St. Peter chooses by preference another great field upon which may be tested the faithfulness of God. He chooses the land of Trouble. What a wonderful land that is! I suppose a clergyman sees more of it than almost anyone, because time after time he has to go with some sufferer into that land. He has to feel his way by the rivers and explore the dark places; he

must look up to see what gleams of light may be shining through the cloud. And therefore we of the clergy feel it quite natural that St. Peter should choose the land of Trouble as the testing-place of the faithfulness of God. But it is a grim place of trial. Just as nothing is so foolish as to underrate difficulties about religion, so nothing is so shallow as to underrate the crushing burden of the troubles which men and women have on earth sometimes to bear. The only wonder is, not that they feel them so much, but that they bear them to the end at all. I know of a young priest, who has only lately married a wife whom he dearly loves. Now, within a few weeks, she lies under the doom of a terrible operation, and that bright joy of his, bright as it was, is completely overcast. Another man whom I saw not long ago, has had hard work all his life, and nothing to give him gain from it. Suddenly a hand was outstretched, as it were, from heaven, with a bright and beautiful cup of joy. He looked up almost astonished with gratitude, and just as he was about to drink of the cup, all of a sudden some unseen hand dashed it out of his hand. When I last saw him he was looking up with the puzzled, horrified

expression of one who is tempted to wonder whether the sceptics are right, after all, when they say that we are like smaller animals, played with before being devoured by some larger one, and whether Professor Huxley was right when he described men as playing a game of chess with an unseen adversary who has no mercy, and never passes over a mistake. Or, again, I have seen a young woman at one moment full of life, rich, and happy, and prosperous, and then driven to face the blighting change by which she and her brothers and her mother have been left to the not too tender mercies of the world. One might go on hour after hour with cases from the land of Trouble, and when I stopped you would take up the story out of your own experience. The land of Trouble is a great and terrible reality. And so comes the great question—is God faithful here also? Is St. Peter right when he says, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator"?

And as we put together notes which explorers have made in the land of Trouble, there is one stage which seems nearly always to be reached first, where we experience what a Scotch minister,

in a very bright and attractive book, has called "the Finding of Nothing." There are many who lose their faith because, when trouble comes, they find nothing to depend upon. But they must remember that the human mind is, after all, a feeble thing, a frail thing, and the sudden shock which trouble brings often brings with it at the beginning the sense of finding nothing. It is that sense of loneliness, of almost desertion, which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself felt in His trouble when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Then comes the second stage, and here comes the real test of a man. Look for a moment at Job. It makes no difference for our purpose whether the Book of Job is a drama or a history; it makes no difference at what date the book was written. It is true for all time to human nature, and when Job was "considered"* he had everything to make him, as his wife suggested he should, "curse God and die." He had satisfied his conscience. He had been most kind to the poor all his life; he had lived as perfectly righteous a life as he knew how to live, and when suddenly everything was taken from him which he cared for at all, and his wife said, "Curse God and die," the trial

* "Hast thou considered My servant Job?"

pierced through to his very soul. But note his answers; they form some of the most touching passages in literature. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "Shall I receive from the hand of the Lord good and not receive evil?" And then, as though he saw through the darkness the glimpse, as it were, of some mysterious being, he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Again, look at our Lord Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Everything was against Him, too; the crushing humiliation and pain that were about to fall upon Him hung over Him like a great black cloud in the garden. What did He do? Did He accept the lower help? Did He summon "twelve legions of angels" to come to His assistance, to get Him out of the trouble? No; kneeling there a few paces from His friends, feeling their sympathy—or longing to feel it—having them near Him, He prayed over and over again, "Not My will, but Thine be done." And so, exactly, when our Gethsemane comes it is a test of what a man is. Shall we run away from the trouble? shall we lie down under it? This is the temptation; but if we follow Christ we shall kneel by Him and say, "Not

my will, but Thine be done." We shall have—we shall like to have—a few chosen friends watching with us; but the battle is to be fought a few paces even from them, and the prayer is to be repeated until it is the settled will and conviction of the man's heart.

But you say, Yes; that is the test of a man, but what is the test of God? Is there anything to prove that God is faithful, a real present help, in the time of trouble? And, of course, in answering a question like this, it is a matter of witness. You cannot positively prove, so as to convey a formal demonstration from yourself to another, that it is so. All the Gospel truths can only be witnessed to. "We are witnesses of these things." And I ask those who have explored the land of Trouble whether they cannot witness to these three things: First, that although the fire of suffering is sometimes very hot indeed—for, remember, He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, and it wants a great deal of heat to purify silver—yet if a man does pray that prayer, if he has prepared himself in Gethsemane, then he is conscious of an unseen and mysterious strength which is given him in the time of trouble; he is conscious of a great

strong Hand, as it were, holding him; he is conscious of some Power which is tempering the fire so that he can just bear it. This shows that the promise is being fulfilled, that no temptation shall overtake him which is greater than he is able to bear. I have seen a man who lost his wife after the first year of wedded life kneel, four days after her funeral, by her grave; and he was so filled with that Divine supernatural strength that he knelt there calm and self-contained in the strength of God. God the Father was faithful to him. He trusted his soul to the faithful Creator, and the faithful Creator was true to him.

And, secondly, is it not true that in the darkness of the land of Trouble comes also a mysterious form—Jesus Christ? You remember how the boy David, in the great poem of Robert Browning, comforts the poor depressed Saul. He goes through all the lower comforts, tells him of the brightness of life—

"How good is man's life, the mere living, how fit to employ
All the heart, and the soul, and the senses for ever in joy."

He speaks of the grandeur of kingship, and then he leads up to the last comfort. He says:

"O, Saul it shall be
A face like my face that receives thee; a man like to me

Thou shalt love and be loved by for ever; a hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!"

And so it is. He comes through the darkness of the land of Trouble with a reality we scarcely know in time of joy; He comes, bringing with Him the cup of suffering which He tasted Himself—nay, drank to the dregs—and saying, "Drink with Me." Shall we refuse? No, not for Paradise.

And, as in the beginning the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of order, brought the *kosmos*—order—out of chaos, so now that same Holy Spirit takes His part in the time of trouble. He descends upon the tortured soul with the most marvellous delicacy of touch, like a holy, gentle dove, brooding upon the soul. He whispers that, after all, life *is* worth living when there are other souls in trouble to be comforted. He speaks, too, of another world where there is no pain; He whispers of noble deeds which yet may be done in life; and, soothing the soul in inexpressible ways, He shows Himself what He is called, the Comforter — the Comforter because the "strengthener" of the soul. Is it not true—the appeal is to those who have suffered

trouble—that God is faithful after this manner? Can we not add our own witness to that which finds expression in the poem from which I have already quoted?

"Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard
When he trusted thee forth with his armies for glorious reward?
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung
The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint tongue
Joining in while it could to the witness, 'Let one more attest
I have lived, seen God's hand through a lifetime, and all was for best'?"

But one word as to the conditions of receiving the faithfulness of God. St. Peter, with his wonderful touch, gives three of them. First, those that suffer must suffer according to the will of God. It is no use laying upon others or upon God the blame of suffering which comes from our own faults, from our own temper. It is easy enough to pose as a martyr, whereas, as a matter of fact, sometimes the pain and sadness come entirely and wholly from our own fault. Thank God He does not desert us even then. He is still a faithful Creator. But we must come with tears of penitence and ask for His faithfulness.

So, again, the suffering of others must be according to the will of God. One of the most awful sentences in the whole Bible is this: "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed." It is hard to reconcile the free will of a man like Judas with the destinies and designs of God. Why should Judas be blamed, when without Judas the Son of Man could not have suffered? But though the explanation of the problem is difficult, the facts are certain. The Son of Man goes with brave, fearless eyes to the death marked out for Him, but woe to him by whom the Son of Man has been betrayed. It were better for that man if he had never been born. There may be some of us who have to ask the question, Are we betraying the Son of Man? Are there some poor servants in our household whose lives we make a burden to them? some young man in the office for whom our management of our business makes it almost impossible to be clean, honest, and true? We have to ask these questions in our hearts searchingly. So, again, we have the second note here, "Commit the keeping of thy soul to Him." There is a beautiful sentence which we use in our services when we pray that

the peace of God shall keep our hearts and minds. The real meaning is, shall garrison or guard them, like an army which comes and settles down in tents and garrisons the whole field. This is the answer to complete self-surrender of the soul. Where the hosts of God settle down, complete peace reigns.

And, lastly, "in well-doing." No morbid retrospect, no craving after a lost Paradise—if it is lost—no wrapping one's self up in selfish sorrow. No, the soul must fling itself forward in "well-doing," in good works. It must throw itself all the more forward for the sorrow of the past. The soul that does so inherits and deserves the faithfulness of God. "Despise not Thou the work of Thine own hands"—that comes to be the prayer in time of trouble—the strong prayer from the Psalms which Bishop Andrewes so constantly used. It is an appeal almost to the pride of the Creator, certainly to His honour. "Despise not Thou the work of Thine own hands," and the answer comes back from heaven, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "I am the Lord; I change not. Therefore (and, we may add, 'only therefore') ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. iii. 6).

II

THE PAIN OF THE WORLD*

"The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain."—ROM. viii. 22.

THERE can be little doubt that the pain of the world is one of the great standing difficulties in the way of a belief in a good God. Read almost any of the writings of the great sceptics, and you will find that all their most powerful passages relate to the pain of the world —the sudden accident that sweeps away hundreds in a moment, the horrors of war, or the long, lingering illness of some loved one. Or when we turn to the thoughts among uneducated savages about some greater being than themselves, we find them almost always shaped by the thought of pain.

* A sermon preached on behalf of the Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund on Sunday afternoon, June 24, 1900, being the Second Sunday after Trinity.

You remember that wonderful analysis of the idea of a savage about his god in the thoughts which Browning sets in the mouth of Caliban upon Setebos, his god. Every ache and pain which came from the fever of the marshes of his island he attributed to the pinching and torturing of his god. He thought that this being must have no mercy. "Thinketh," so the phrase runs, "he dwelleth in the cold of the moon?" When he turned to ask himself, in his blind way, what was the origin of creation, "Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease?" "He made all these, and more; made all we see, and us, in spite." And, when we turn to ourselves, do I carry you with me when I say that some of our darkest hours of doubt and distress have been when we were watching the lingering pain of someone whom we loved? We pray for a night's sleep for the dear mother, or the dear father, but no sleep comes at all. We simply long ourselves to relieve, if only by a little, the lingering anguish of the cancer eating away the strength; but nothing happens, no relief is given; the doctors do what they can, the nurse toils on night after night, the very schoolboy hushes his voice, the children cease their play, but God, what does

God do? He seems to take no notice. He does not seem to care, and a mocking voice repeats that terrible line:

"On the hills, like gods together, careless of mankind."

Nor is it any use at all underrating the seriousness of the problem. Nothing is so irritating to thinking people as to try and make out that these problems are not problems, which we have seriously to consider; the full reason we can never know—

"We suffer, why we suffer, that is hid
With God's foreknowledge in the clouds of Heaven."*

It is no good for a moment underrating the horrors of a battlefield, or trying to minimise the awful shock of a railway accident. No, it is useless to deny that there is a great mystery in pain and suffering, and a mystery which in this world we never shall fully understand. But that does not prevent us, in a Christian church on Sunday afternoon, tracing with eagerness the light which is thrown by the Christian revelation on these great problems, and it will go hard with us if we cannot find some light thrown upon the problem of pain.

* Mrs. Hamilton King, "The Disciples."

The Pain of the World

1. And the first thing for us all to realise is that the thing which we quarrel with is not pain at all, but what pain produces. Pain is the great life-preserver of the world. But the real fact which, we sometimes think, makes it impossible for us to believe in the love of God, is not the pain, but what produces the pain—the mortality of the body, old age, and gradual death. And so we must ask whether the presence of decay, old age, infirmity, and death does really demonstrate the carelessness or the callousness of God? And to answer that, we must ask one question more: Why was the world created at all? What was the object of creation? Why is it that when God was perfect in Himself, He created men and women at all? And there has never been any intelligible answer to that question, except this, that He created in order to produce more happiness, out of a pure and spontaneous desire to have more thousands and millions of happy people. Now, notice the bearing of this upon decay and death. If there were no decay and death, and no mortality, there would be a thousand times less happiness in the world than there is. If the millions who live on this planet were to perpetually live here, generation after generation,

æon after æon, and never to make way for another generation to come, it is perfectly clear that those millions would make it impossible in the ages for millions of others to find a place for existence at all; and therefore we begin to see that the arrangement under which one generation passes away and makes way for another, even from the natural point of view, is something which does not demonstrate for a moment the unkindness or the callousness of God. If you think of it, one of the most touching scenes in life is to see a grandfather with his grandchildren on his knee, or the mother and father with their children gathered round them. But that co-existence of the old and the young, that love of a grandfather for his grandchildren, becomes impossible unless the bodily frame which is given us on earth does slowly decay, and the tired servant is laid to rest to make way for the child that is born to-day. And if that is so from a natural point of view, ten times more is it true when we take the Christian doctrine of another world. The whole scene, then, becomes bright with glory, the little child comes from heaven, and the old man, honoured, respected, with all the experience gathered in this school of life on earth, goes to immortality. It has been said,

"God can hold the infant like a mother, can build a wall round the strong man as he fights the noon-day battle of life, and lay the bridge of sunset over which the old man's feet shall walk serenely into eternal life." And therefore we who have had to bury our fathers with lamentation, who know what it is to part with them, and what a terrible blank is left in life—a blank never filled up—still know that God's arrangement is for the best; that as the outward man decays, so the inward man is being renewed day by day, and that the happiest moment of the soul shall be when the new man receives the crown of perfection after the training of the rest of Paradise.

2. And, if that is our answer to the theory that decay and death are an argument against the goodness of God, what shall we say to pain? Here also the answer is near at hand. How were you warned and directed throughout that last illness? What was it that first made you send for the physician who healed you? What was it that at every moment of your illness guided him in his treatment of you? What was the best nurse you had all through that time? It was Pain. But for the pain you never would have known you were ill at all; but for the pain and the position of it,

your physician would never have known where the ailment was; but for the pain which was present all the time, guiding and helping those who were nursing you, you might not have been alive now. Just as on a railway, the danger signal flashes out, first on the distance signals, then upon the home signals, and so, if attended to, saves that great freight of living souls from death, even thus pain is the great danger signal for the preservation of life. And who gave it you? God gave it you. Pain was one of the guardian angels for your physical life, as we believe you have other guardian angels for your soul. Pain brought you through that illness as a child, pain saved you in that accident, as a boy or a girl, pain sat by you hour after hour in the long sickness; and, unthanked and unacknowledged, as you left your room amid the congratulations of your friends, pain stood behind the door.

And, therefore, those who at this moment are imagining in their mind that the presence of pain in the world must make them give up their belief in the love of God have not gone deep in their study of the problem. God gave us pain, and let us thank God for it.

3. And if that is the true work of pain for the

physical life, look thirdly to see what a marvellous effect pain has upon the moral being. Not always, —let us be honest. Pain sometimes makes men curse and writhe; it turns them to blasphemy, drives them to drink; it demoralises them. But if you wish to have an illustration of what pain can do for one who at this moment is slowly dying of the pain of cancer, listen to this poem of a Christian priest, who wrote it in the middle of a night of pain; it is called "Meditations in a Night of Pain":

"'Tis peace in pain to know that pain
Secured us pain's eternal end,
And that the more exceeding gain
To which by grace our souls ascend
My great Redeemer won for me
By more exceeding agony.

"'Tis true my pain is still my pain,
Heavy its hand on thought and prayer,
But while that love to me is plain,
It lays *its* hand upon despair;
And now I know this faint 'How long?'
For me may quicken into song.

"Beholding Thee, in what repose,
In what still streams of Paradise,
Beholding memory of Thy woes
Still in those deep pathetic eyes.
Ah me! what bless'd exchange for pain,
If I attain—if I attain.

"Am I too soon in love with death?
I know not if 'tis ill or well;
If ill, then, Master, stay this breath,
Deny mine ear the passing bell.
One thing I ask, since I am Thine,
Thy will be done—Thy will be mine."*

If we do not see that pain has given the writer of that a moral victory, and that he has been drawn nearer and nearer to his Master by pain, then I say there must be something wrong in our moral instincts.

But now let us consider what our religion can give us, not only in our own hours of pain, but in the hour of watching the pain of those whom we love?

First, it reveals to us the object which pain serves. Nothing in the world is so terrible as the apparent uselessness of a thing. We can bear almost anything if it is for an object, and the great object which the writer of that poem has grasped, and which sufferer after sufferer understands, is that when pain comes to a Christian, it is intended to make him more and more like his Master, Jesus Christ. When pain comes, we ought to say: "This is Jesus Christ saying, 'Are

* Written by the Rev. W. H. Stone, author of "The Church's one Foundation," a few weeks before he died.

ye able to drink of the cup that I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' " If we answer humbly: "Yes, I will try to believe that every hour of pain makes me more like my Master," then we find an object in pain which takes away its worst sting. I remember watching, week after week, by a poor girl, who had seventeen years of pain; and the reading which most delighted her, of which she was never tired, was one about the stonemason's workshop*—how the mason takes his tools and shapes the stone here, and works away there, with little apparent change from day to day, but the result of it all is that the fretted and worked and beautiful stone is at last in the place meant for it in the temple. It revealed to her an object for all her pain. If you can give to a sufferer the thought that there is Someone busy with her, moulding and shaping, you have given a helpful thought. Even so our Christian revelation gives an end to pain. In the lesson for St. John the Baptist's Day, we have this beautiful verse: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." To believe that there is someone who is tempering the flame,

* In Bishop Walsham How's "Pastor in Parochia" (Wells Gardner, Darton and Co.).

who is not letting one single throb of agony be too much or too great, that this is not a matter left to mad chance or to the spite of some devil—it is this which takes away the bitterness from pain. Lie still in the furnace, if the kind face of God is looking down on you; lie still in the furnace, because the moment that the silver is so bright as to perfectly reflect the face bent over it, that moment it will be taken from the furnace.

And there is yet one more thought which Christianity gives about pain which I have seen time after time take the sting away, and that is the knowledge of companionship in pain. "Did I not cast three men bound into the burning fiery furnace, and do I not see four men loose, and the fire has not passed upon them, and the form of the fourth is as the Son of God?" Companionship in suffering. Ah! how the poor so often say, "It is nothing to what He suffered for me," and mean it when they say it. That shows how companionship in the furnace, the form of the fourth like the Son of God, is truly given in our Christian religion, and it is something which comforts the soul in pain more than any other thought in the world.

But we should indeed misunderstand the Christian teaching about pain if we thought that because of these uses, because of this work of pain, we are to leave it unrelieved. One of the most blessed works of Pain is to produce sympathy. If we ask how it is that the refreshing breeze is produced in the physical world, we know that it comes from the rush of cold air to fill up a vacuum. Is it not a beautiful thought that the pain of the world creates a vacuum which is to be filled by the magic power of sympathy. The existence of pain in our midst is for the production of love and sympathy. What, then, is the response that we are going to make to the pain of London? You need to go and live for ten or twelve years in the middle of the slums of this great city if you want really to understand what the hospitals mean; you need to go as some of us have done, time after time, to some poor girl dying on a heap of rags, to carry her into one of these great houses of rest, and then to see her a day or two afterwards, lying there at peace and tenderly nursed, with a kind doctor and a skilful nurse ever at hand. You must see that sight, time after time, before you can understand what the hospitals are. You must go at any hour of the day or

night, as we parish priests have to do, to the London hospitals, and see the lad being cured who would have died if he had been left in the slum where he lived. You must picture some little garret at the top of an overcrowded tenement in Bethnal Green, and think what it is to be sick there, with no one to nurse you, no one to attend to you, and then think what it is to lie in a cool ward of a hospital, with everything that science can give you at your disposal, to relieve and to heal you. Never believe the libels which you sometimes hear about the hospitals with regard to the treatment of patients. They are most blessed homes of sympathy and love and rest.

The whole creation, then, groaneth and travaileth in pain. We face it for ourselves, and we face it for others. It comes to us with its stern, repulsive look, but we look at it again, and it has the eyes of a friend. It has gifts behind its back, gifts of self-restraint, of self-mastery, of a closer nearness to Jesus Christ. We wrestle with it as Jacob wrestled with the angel, and, though we may have to go limping all our days, as he did, we can become "Israels"—princes who have power with God, and have prevailed.

And then we face it for others. We face Pain

as she stands with the authority of Christ in our midst this afternoon: "Inasmuch as ye do it to them, ye do it to Me." She waves, as it were, her magic wand over us, to draw out from us the sympathy she has the power to create.

It is a frosty air which often meets us in the world.

> "Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
> Thou art not more unkind
> Than man's ingratitude."

But, on the other hand, Pain cries aloud: "Come from the four winds, O breath of the Spirit, and breathe on these dry bones, that they may live!" God grant we may rise as a great multitude of living, loving men and women, and do our duty!

III

THE SPIRITUAL EXPANSION OF THE EMPIRE *

"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation."—DAN. iv. 3.

IT would have been scarcely possible for the Bicentenary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to have come round at a more appropriate time; for it finds us for the first time in the course of our national history really understanding what an Empire means. Shall we ever forget the thrill of Mafeking? Never, I believe, while the Empire lasts; at that moment we realised ourselves as one people, and from the distant limit of India to Toronto, Sydney, Melbourne, and the islands of the sea, we discovered

* Preached on the Bicentenary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, before Her Majesty's Judges, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Councillors of the City of London, June, 1900.

that one purpose, one ideal, and one flag inspired us all.

But it was not merely in that tingling rush of joy in a moment of intense relief that we found out what it was to belong to a world wide kingdom: we discovered it in the stern joy of self-sacrifice. The astounding sight to-day, as those human billows which constitute the Imperial Army roll slowly across the African veldt, is not their number so much as their diversity. Hunters from Canada, squatters from Australia, jostle with burly Yorkshiremen; millionaires and railwaymen, the duke and his ploughman, fight side by side with the same coolness, or watch through the night for the morning with the same cheerful equanimity. "You seem to have good sea legs," said an officer on a transport to a private in the Yeomanry who was industriously cleaning the decks in a gale of wind. "Yes, sir," explained the other, "but I have kept a yacht myself for the last eight years."

Then, again, it is not only that race feeling and class prejudice have been swept away by the rising tide of patriotism, just as some slender barriers which divide a stream are tossed on one side contemptuously when the stream becomes a flood;

but, to the astonishment of all concerned, each has so much to give the other. The Colonies will never be the same Colonies as they were before the war. They will be Colonies which have shared with the old mother one baptism of blood; the hearts of the children will be turned to the fathers and of the fathers to the children. Australia, Canada, New Zealand—they will never be to us only the Australia, Canada, New Zealand of a few years ago; down in the heart of the people, where every little slum had its flags up for Ladysmith and Mafeking, there is enshrined the image of those very Canadians who fought so gallantly with a brother at Paardeberg, of those Australians who were the good comrades of a husband in some night attack, and of that New Zealander who looked after a well-loved boy when he was wounded. The object of this long Empire-building throughout the world has been revealed at last; the policy of allowing free communities to work out their own salvation within the Empire has been more than justified; unity of purpose has been shown to be consistent with diversity of method, and the whole confederate body has given the promise of a lasting strength. Surely a kingdom which is built upon the principles of

justice, freedom, and security of rights, and which after so long a trial can create so passionate a loyalty in the sons she has brought forth, has the promise, so far as human empires can have such a promise, of being an everlasting kingdom, and its dominion enduring from generation to generation.

But a moment's reflection will show that this promise of continuing strength can only be fulfilled on one condition, namely, that, as the Empire expands, some security shall be taken that these principles of justice, truth, honour, respect for the rights of man, regard for the honour of women, reverence for little children, shall be the only sap which gives it life. Without such security the British Empire may become the greatest curse which has ever disgraced an unhappy world.

Most of us, after a time, have arrived at the conviction that, so far as our individual lives are concerned, God is no respecter of persons; but it is far harder to convince us that God is no respecter of nations. The Jew to this moment believes, as he always has believed, that his race is a chosen race, in the sense of being a race favoured for itself, whereas, like all other chosen

races, it was chosen for a purpose, and that purpose a purpose for the world at large. The Englishman, while he smiles at the Jew, is often not far behind him in his complacent certainty that there is some special virtue in the British Empire, as such, which ensures the favour of High Heaven, and makes it infallibly a blessing to the world.

But it would be impossible to make a wilder or more miserable mistake; we are chosen, but we are chosen for a purpose, and if we fail in it, there will be no need for casting us aside, for we shall fall by the inherent weakness of the building we have raised.

Lest this seem to be an empty fear, look at what has happened in India. Has our rule been an unmixed blessing? Has our system of education been so wonderfully successful in its effect upon the morals of the people? If we consider it a triumph to have destroyed, by the education which we have brought, every fragment of belief which the student once possessed, and with it all those moral restraints which that belief, erroneous as it might be, carried with it, then we have succeeded; but all impartial observers tell us that, if we do not intend to put a nobler faith in the place of the one we have destroyed, then we have most miserably

failed. Again, look at what has happened to other great empires. I was speaking a few days ago to a famous lady traveller who has lived among the peoples of many of the other great empires of the earth. I asked what it was, if anything, she noticed as resulting from the absence of a noble religion? and she replied, "The absence of any sense of responsibility; not merely the lack of truth, but the lack of any feeling that untruth is wrong, the total deficiency of all ennobling ideals. That it is," she said, "which has converted me from previous apathy to a strong belief in missions."

How, then, are we to guarantee that sound principles, saving truths ennobling ideals shall be soldered into the stones, and mortared round the bricks, and stamped upon the arches of the British Empire, as it rises throughout the world? And we Christians, gathered in this great Christian church, answer, with a profound conviction, that it is only if a belief in historic Christianity is engraved upon every living stone as it is built in, and stamped as the hall-mark on every tool that is used, and mixed into the mortar on which every brick is laid, that any sure guarantee can be given that when the floods come and the winds

blow and beat upon that house, it will not fall, for it is founded on a rock.

And this is where the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has played so noble a part during the last 200 years; it has come in to be the conscience of the Empire; it has come in to quicken the conscience of the Church of the Empire; it has come in to make the British Empire a blessing and not a curse to the nations. A child can see that to govern India the Government itself must be impartial to all creeds alike; it cannot itself as a Government propagate Christianity. But a spiritual kingdom can advance round the world side by side with the Empire; inside it and yet independent of it, planting itself here, getting its footing there, not making the fatal mistake of so hurrying as to have unconverted enemies in the rear, or so evangelizing as to have no time to organize a kingdom that will last; but with unresting and yet patient steps following the flag of England with the banner of the Cross, and tracing out its dioceses of the kingdom of Christ as province after province is added to the dominions of the Queen. This can be done, and this has been done, and no Christian patriot can deny that those who have done it have done

a noble thing. What they have done may be gathered from such facts as these. In 1793 there was one clergyman in Australia; there are now fifteen Bishops and 850 clergy: at the time of the Mutiny in India it was said that if the hated English had been swept into the sea, no proofs would have been left behind that a Christian people had occupied the country, whereas now, of the 521 missionaries, 245 are natives of the country, mainly supported by their own people: and when we turn from the Empire itself to the great child of the Empire, no testimonial can be more touching than that given by the daughter Church of America, which has sent two of her Bishops to preach to us at this Festival. "At the close of the first century of our existence as a National Church, we acknowledge with deep and unfeigned gratitude that whatever this Church has been in the past, is now, and will be in the future, is largely due, under God, to the long-continued nursing care and protection of this venerable society. . . . That it may continue to receive the abundant blessing of our Heavenly Father . . . is the sincere and earnest prayer of every Churchman in the United States."

This from a Church which now numbers eighty-

four Bishops and 4,692 priests and deacons is a tribute of which any mother society may be gratefully proud.

It is nothing less than a test of whether or not we believe in Christianity, to examine how keen we are that the "Spiritual Expansion of the Empire" (to use the happy title of a shilling book that all should read who may be doubtful about the usefulness of missions) shall go side by side with its material expansion. If we care nothing, then we practically deny that Christ is the Light of the world, that Christians are meant to be the salt of the earth, and that the Christian religion teaches for all time the Way, the Truth, and the Life. On the other hand, if we do believe this, then our sons and brothers will be at home in every quarter of the globe; the parent will no more grudge the son to work for the Church for five years in Australia than to take up a five years' appointment as an engineer; volunteers will be as freely coming forward to convert Africa to Christ as they have poured forward to preserve Africa to the Queen; there will be as great rejoicing when some lonely missionary at last succeeds as when Mafeking was relieved; there will be a constant give and take throughout the Empire; inde-

pendent daughter Churches, untrammelled by our difficulties, and elastic enough to face their own problems, will pour new light upon our difficulties and problems at home; the Church in England, roused from its slumber, will bring out of its treasures things new and old, and the boys and young men, whom we have sent out ourselves, and whom, to our disgrace, we are allowing in Australia, and other parts, to be for five, ten, and even twenty years without a clergyman, will be brought again under the religion of their childhood, and made themselves workers for God.

We received a telegram from Australia yesterday: "Nunn gone, Collett gone. Send two more at once. Cable reply immediately." If that had come from Lord Roberts, the Lord Mayor would have sent out this week another corps of Imperial Volunteers. What will be the answer to the urgent appeal of a spiritual captain?

Now, it is surely inconceivable that any Christian Englishman should not, at any rate in theory, agree with what has been so far said. To be a lasting power for good the Empire must be a Christian Empire, and if it is a Christian Empire the Church must accompany the Flag.

But, of course, it is well known that as a Church

we aim at far more than this; everyone knows that our object is nothing less than the conversion of the whole world, that the British Empire is a merely feeble type of the kingdom which is in our minds, which is to consist of all nations and comprise all tongues, which is to be completely organized at last from sea to sea, and to yield an unquestioned allegiance to Jesus Christ Himself. That is the everlasting kingdom for which we pray; that, in spite of all the divisions of Christendom, is the Empire which we believe the world shall one day see; and then, and not till then, will this ancient prophecy in Daniel be fulfilled—"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation."

And it is here, only too often, that the ordinary Englishman joins issue with the missionary cause. "Quite apart from the question as to whether missions do any good," he says, "look at the trouble they get us into in every quarter of the globe. What is all this trouble in China about? Simply in consequence of the missionaries. Of course, we cannot leave them to be massacred when they are there, but they ought not to be there at all; these missions to foreign lands are all a vast mistake; spend your money at home, and

when you have made all in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green good Christians, then, and not till then, there will be something to be said for going abroad."

1. The question is well worth raising, for it brings us face to face with the further question, What was Christ's idea? and we find that the idea of our Lord is contained in the famous saying, "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you all the days even to the end of the world."

I ask anyone who up to this time has not believed in foreign missions to weigh these words, and candidly say whether the idea of this society or his own is more in accordance with Christ's idea, and he must admit that the idea in Christ's mind was the thought of One Holy Catholic Church, to be spread throughout the whole world —nay, further, that Christ only promises His presence to a Missionary Church—"Go into all the world," He bids us, "and then I am with you;" but there is no promise of His Presence if we cease to go into all the world. What a lurid light

this throws upon the deadness of the Church at home at certain stages of its history, the deadness of many parishes now in the home Church, and also, alas! the deadness of many souls!

Are you feeling at this moment a great absence of interest in religion? Do you find Christ far away from you, and no sense of His presence, and no power of His Spirit? It is because you have ceased to be a missionary soul, or have not yet become one; you are not going into all the world with your prayers, and alms, and sympathy, any more than by your personal efforts, and therefore He is not in full measure with you all the days, even to the end of the world.

2. Look at the totally different view the first Christians took. They understood perfectly their commission; all the disciples were lost sight of, went preaching into the distance so far that their last journeys are lost to sight; they respected home calls, but home calls never interfered with foreign missions; there were only two Apostles in Antioch, the second city of the Roman world, but there was no moment of hesitation when the order came "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"; they quite understood the object for which they existed, that to spread

and expand is not only a sign of life, but the condition of life itself, and that only so was it possible to found a kingdom that should be an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion from generation to generation.

3. Look, again, with what singularly bad grace such a theory comes from the lips of one who lives in this part of a land which was once barbarous Britain, and who owes his Christianity largely to a party of monks, who, at the peril of their lives, and paid for by the country of Italy, faced the dangers of foreign missionary work, to reinforce the hard-beset Church existing already in these islands, and bring us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

4. See that you get your evidence about missionary work from those who know, and not from those who never see because they have not looked to see.

How much would a visitor at the Hotel Metropole, who spent his day in the Park, or in the club, and his evening at the theatre, know about the mission work in East London? And yet there are hundreds who pay hurried visits to the Metropoles of Calcutta, Sydney, and New York, and then come back and have the effrontery

to give us their crude opinions about foreign missions and native Christians. Why, probably the only native Christian they ever met was a native Christian who, having been turned out of the long-suffering mission-station for misconduct, has drifted into the town, to be a standing source of scandal to Christianity among the light-hearted travellers who never take the trouble to look below the surface.

But go to the real places where the mission work is going on, and what do we find? You find twenty years ago not a native Christian at Rorke's Drift, to-day 5,000 ministered to by native catechists at more than ninety stations under the direction of one missionary of this society. At the beginning of the Queen's reign you find Samoa entirely heathen, and now in it 25,000 Christians; you hear Mr. Charles Darwin, whose testimony is above suspicion, saying of Tahiti, "The morality and religion of the inhabitants are highly creditable; dishonesty, intemperance, and licentiousness have been greatly reduced by the introduction of Christianity"; and, again, "The lesson of the missionary is the enchanter's wand —the march of improvement consequent on the introduction of Christianity throughout the South

Sea probably stands by itself in the records of history."

In this question, then, as in so many, we must take our stand either by Christ or by the world; it is clear what Christ commands; it is proved that if those commands are obeyed all power is at last given over language, over climate, over prejudice abroad and apathy at home; at any given moment the wave may seem to fall back, but it is only the momentary check of a wave which is slowly sweeping round the world. The Church has its martyrs to-day in the martyrs who have fallen in China as it had its martyrs in the days of Stephen, Polycarp, and Blandina; but the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, and if without fear or failing we fill up the ranks and carry out our marching orders with that alacrity which is our chief characteristic when our Empire is concerned, we shall see advancing with giant strides upon the earth that kingdom which shall be an everlasting kingdom, and that dominion which shall endure from generation to generation.*

* Readers of the *Times* will have since read the unstinting praise which Dr. Morrison, its correspondent, gives to the conduct, fidelity and courage of the large number of native Christians besieged in the Foreign Legation in Pekin.

IV

THE DEAD LAZARUS IN ENGLAND*

"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone."—St. John xi. 39.

LAZARUS was dead. Wrapped hands and feet in grave-clothes, and with a napkin about his head, he lay cold and lifeless in the tomb that was his grave. Opposite him, confronting him, was the Lord of Life, qualified with full powers to raise him from the dead, come from heaven with all the authority and all the power of the Holy Trinity for that purpose. Very soon the voice was to sound which alone on earth had power to call back the vanished spirit from "that bourne from which no traveller returns." And yet before the Lord of Life could speak, or would speak, the word of power to the dead, there was something to be done, and that by the loving hands of men and women. "Take ye away the stone." It was the preliminary condition of the miracle.

* Preached during the meeting in London of the World's Temperance Congress.

The Dead Lazarus in England

We have no time in this address to dwell upon the miracle itself, in many ways infinitely the most touching miracle that Jesus Christ worked at all—with the wonderful comfort which it brings to those who have lost their dear ones, and the splendid hope which it has brought into the world —or to emphasise the startling climax, "Lazarus, come forth; loose him and let him go."

We have only time to centre our thoughts on the preliminary condition before the miracle could happen, the taking away of the stone.

We are divided in all questions of social reform into two parties. There are those, first of all, who, with pathetic hopefulness, are quite certain that to change circumstances is to change character. Only give Lazarus a chance, and he is sure to rise; only change the circumstances and the conditions of his life, and he will come out from his grave. On the other hand, there are others who lay all their stress upon individual character. Nothing, they say, is more weakening to the moral fibre than grandmotherly legislation. Difficulties and the surmounting of difficulties only strengthen character. If Lazarus wants to rise, let him rise, in spite of the grave clothes, in spite of the napkin about his head, in spite of the stone;

let him raise himself. And, as always happens when two different points of view are held by bodies of earnest men, both sides have a great deal to say for themselves. Come down into a slum in East London, and then see if you will not find an argument for the first side. Picture the life of those who live, seven or eight in one room—the only room to eat and sleep in—and then say if it is not harder to live a decent Christian life under those conditions than under your own. While, on the other hand, the fact that working men who have excellent wages, who live in decent houses, and rich men who find nothing in the world to desire which they cannot obtain, often are as selfish, hard, and cruel as it is possible to be, is an argument that circumstances do not necessarily change character. But if we want to find a picture which reconciles the two views and gives us the truth which lies between them, I ask you to call up before your minds the scene of this miracle—Lazarus in the grave, capable of being raised from the dead, Jesus alone capable of raising him by His power from the dead, and yet the stone pressing down Lazarus which someone must take away.

Now, it so happens that this question has some-

thing far more than an academic interest to-day. This week there is being held in London the World's Temperance Congress, and the question which fronts us is the question of what we are to do with the Lazarus who is facing us at every corner in the person of the modern drunkard. He has a sort of life in our midst: he faces us in the country, in the town, among the poor, among the rich, among the educated and the uneducated: he is that figure with which you who live in the country are familiar, loitering round the village public-house on a Sunday: and yet he is dead, quite dead, to all heavenly things—dead to all higher life, and a centre of corruption to the boys and young men of his village. You have only to visit our great working-class quarters on a wet Bank Holiday if you wish to see how little progress civilisation and Christianity have yet made upon the animalism of human nature. Follow that drunkard going home from the public-house if you want to see the full misery of this living death: go and see his little children in rags, his poor tired wife almost crushed to death, and then say, if you can, that the problem of the dead Lazarus is a small problem to-day. It is quite true that among the richer classes open

drunkenness at dinner parties has largely decreased during this century, but some of the worst secret drunkards of whom I know are among the rich; while as for those who think that education will necessarily save a man from giving way to drink, I can only say that among the most difficult cases in my own experience I remember the names of a highly-educated clergyman and of a layman who has taken high honours at the University.

Lazarus, then, faces us at every quarter. What are we to do with him? And let us be perfectly fair to those who say that they would rather see England free than England sober. This epigrammatic saying is supposed by some temperance reformers to be a mocking gibe: it contains a great truth. It is perfectly true that no one can be made sober by Act of Parliament. Let us be perfectly frank and open in answer to those who say so. We believe most firmly that it is only the power of that living Saviour who stands above the grave of Lazarus which can eventually so change a man's character as to raise him from the dead. But the question is whether there is not pressing upon the modern Lazarus something so heavy, something which so cripples him, that, if it were removed, his chance of being raised

from the dead would be increased tenfold. Listen, then, to these facts which I have collected about the drink traffic of England, in order to convince some of you, who may not have thought out the problem, that there is a stone which we Christian people are bound to take away.

In the first place, the amount spent on drink in England is £154,000,000 a year. Of this sum it is calculated that £100,000,000 are spent by the working classes of this country. Without deducting the 3,000,000 teetotalers and the 14,000,000 children, that gives the average spent by every working-class family in England as 6s. 5d. every week. A committee of the British Association—an association which is above any taint of partiality on such a question as this—placed the average between 6s. 2d. and 6s. 5d.

Secondly, in London alone, there is a licensed house for every 446 inhabitants, and in many parts for every 193. Look at any map such as those which appear in an excellent book on the temperance problem by Mr. Rowntree and Mr. Sherwell; and you will find some of the working-class quarters of London black with dots, which represent the public-houses in the district.

Thirdly, the rateable value of the public-house

trade of London is six times the rateable value of all the Board schools and the Church schools put together, and is one-twentieth of the rateable value of the whole of London.

Fourthly, this particular trade has an overwhelming power in the community in the midst of which we live. This power is often individually exercised with the greatest generosity. There is no body of people so generous to the Church work of East London as the great brewers of East London, and no individuals who give more personal service in the cause of philanthropy. But that does not alter the fact that, as an organised trade, it has an overwhelming power in England. I should not like to see the Bench of Bishops holding anything like the power which that trade possesses to-day. And one of the greatest and most far-seeing statesmen of our day has said, that if the State does not soon control the liquor traffic, the liquor traffic will soon control the State. And I believe that if this trade put forth at any election, political or municipal, all the power which it possesses, it could control all the elections.

Fifthly, 38 per cent. of the drunkards of England are women. You who know what a

pure woman's life is, or ought to be, you who have ever seen the most saddening spectacle which there is beneath the sun except one, a drunken woman—the saddest is a drunken child—picture what this great fact means, that 38 per cent. of the drunkards of England are women.

Sixthly, we have from Sir Andrew Clark, whose knowledge of both classes of society was probably unrivalled, this statement, that out of the cases which he visited in the great hospitals, seven out of every ten who were there owed their ailment or their accident directly or indirectly to the abuse of alcohol. And he also is reported to have said that, in what is called "fashionable society," three out of every four persons who consulted him were suffering from the same cause.

I hold, then, that these six facts—and I restrict myself to the mere statement of them—prove that there is a stone allowed by this country to be pressing down Lazarus into his grave which, if our country were thoroughly Christian, we should remove.

I pass, then, to the next point. Have we any reason to suppose that temperance work, combined with temperance legislation, works any good at all upon this difficult problem? And we can

only see whether this is so by watching what happens in some other country which has adopted some such measures. And I take, therefore, as an example of what can be done by temperance legislation the country of Norway. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Norway was the most drunken country in Europe; it is by far the most sober country at the end. How was that marvellous change worked? The century opened with an indiscriminate allowance of distillation, and such a fearful effect was worked upon Norway and Sweden by this absence of all restraint, that in the middle of the century 36 per cent. of all the conscripts were pronounced unfit for military service. In the year 1855 the Dean of Gothenburg began his reforms. He, and those who were associated with him, worked upon these principles: elimination of private profit; the forbidding of the sale of drink to children; reduction in the number of licenses; Sunday closing; shortening of the hours of sale; the establishment of reading-rooms; and by the end of the century the result of their efforts is that, last year, the total amount drunk in Norway was one-third of what was drunk in 1876, and one-seventh of what was drunk in 1833. It is quite true that a comparatively small country

like Norway can try experiments which are impossible for a great country like our own, but it does make our hearts yearn with hope to think that we ourselves, if we stood together and were in earnest in this great cause, might make England the soberest country in the world. Why is it that at this moment there seems a special opportunity for a great effort? In the first place, for the first time in the history of the temperance movement, all temperance reformers are united upon one programme. On what is called the "Minority Report," drawn up by a man well known throughout the whole of the world for impartiality and soundness of judgment, a man who entered upon his office as chairman of the Royal Commission with no bias at all one way or the other—on that "Minority Report" all the temperance organisations of the country have at last united. Secondly, the majority of the Royal Commission and the minority agree upon some very important changes in the law which might at once be carried out. When you think that the majority of the Royal Commission included some of the leading representatives of the liquor traffic in England, it does great credit to their impartiality, and gives great weight to the overwhelming evidence which must

have been brought before them, to find that both the majority and the minority unite on the following recommendations—that the number of licensed houses should be largely reduced; that the compensation to be paid should be provided by the trade itself; that no drink should be sold to children under the age of sixteen; that the hours of trade should be limited further in England, and restrictions should be placed on the transfer of licenses. When you find a body of men so divided in sentiment and training, united upon such important recommendations as these, I say that a Christian community ought to rise as one man and take the initial step towards the rolling away of the stone which presses Lazarus down.*

Why, then, my friends, do I bring this before you this afternoon? The reason is that it is just such a representative body as gathers in this Cathedral on Sunday afternoons which holds the whole question in its hands. How can any Government bring forward measures unless it is backed up by the sense of the whole of the community? It is the apathy, not of the working classes—you

* The Children's Bill of 1901, and the Bill introduced this year, dealing with habitual drunkards, clubs, etc., are a step in the right direction.

should have seen our East End temperance meeting the other day, with 2,500 people filling the Queen's Hall in the Mile End Road, all united in a passionate desire for some of these reforms —it is not the apathy of the working classes, but of the educated classes, which is the hindrance to temperance reform. I ask you, first of all, to study the subject yourselves, to buy that book to which I have already referred, where all these facts are drawn out in a most interesting and lucid manner. Secondly, let every man face this question: "What am I doing? I shall have to answer in the presence of the Holy Trinity some day for what I have done while on earth ; what have I done to roll away the stone which lies over Lazarus?" You can do much by seeing that in the place where you live there is some other place for the working lad and the working girl and the working man and woman to go to besides the public-house. I have seen during these past twelve years bright, attractive houses set down in our great working-class quarters, and I have seen the men and the lads rise and respond to the offer ; in one place alone you may see 200 self-respecting young working men of twenty-five or twenty-six years old, some

of whom I have known from the age of fourteen, living sober, self-respecting lives through the influence of a single boys' club. Go and work in your own district; see that no lad, no girl, no man or woman, shall ever say they have nowhere to go except to the public-house, and you will do something towards rolling away the stone. Thirdly, let those of you who control the City and have to do with business see that not one of your young clerks, or those connected with your business, shall have the temptation of having to drink over every bargain that is made. If once men of standing would set their faces against that perpetual treating over bargains, a great stone might be rolled away from many whom it has pressed down into drinking ways. Fourthly, see whether there is not an individual Lazarus whom you yourself might help to rise. They want, not our contempt, but our sympathy and help. What happiness to be the means of leading back some poor miserable Lazarus, dead to heavenly things, until you can see him standing, a breathing and living man before you, able to praise God and take his part in the worship of the Holy Trinity! Fifthly, and lastly, exercise the power of prayer. When Peter was in prison prayer was made for him by name,

and Peter was set free. To work for one single Lazarus, to pray for him, to give him a chance of a new life, to let him feel that there is someone who cares about him, is the very best way of raising him from the dead.

This, then, my brothers and sisters, is the picture with which I would send you back this afternoon. Jesus Christ came from heaven "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," but He is unable to do much of the great work which He came to do because of our unbelief. Away with unbelief! Let it never be said that He came to the English nation and could not raise our dead because of our unbelief. And this is His first command, "Take ye away the stone."

V

THE COMFORTER

"The Comforter."—St. John xv. 26.

THERE is no day which is more paralysing to the preacher than Whit Sunday. To try and comprehend all the truth of Whitsuntide is to try and compass the ocean, to analyse the atmosphere, or tame the light. The truth of Whitsuntide touches us at every single point. In the first place, it reveals to us the secret of Nature. What was it, we ask, which turned that formless chaos into the beautiful order which we see to-day? The Spirit, we are told, brooded over the face of the waters. Again, He gave man his natural strength. Samson received his strength, and the architect Bezaleel his skill, by the gift of the Spirit. And if it reveals the secret of Nature, it also unfolds the secret of a nation's life. The

picture rises before us continually at this time of brave, strong men, perfectly fearless, fighting for their country. Who gave to them that courage, that fearless bravery, that calmness in the hour of danger? The Spirit. They go forward into the battle as much gifted by the Spirit as any clergyman at his work. What has inspired in the nation self-sacrifice, calmness in danger, unity? The Spirit. We turn to the Church; we watch what goes on in a great church like this. A congregation gathers by the great font; a little child lies in the arms of the minister. What are we waiting for before anything can take place? The Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies that water, so that the font becomes a laver of regeneration. Without Him we can do nothing. Or, we meet in the chancel some quiet morning in the week, and a hundred kneeling figures, half of them in white, are with us. Whom are we waiting for? Without whom is the whole service absolutely meaningless? We are waiting for the Spirit, for the "falling of the Holy Ghost" in the laying on of hands. "As yet," we are told, in the record which gives us our authority and our encouragement, "He had fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Or, in the north-west chapel, a little band in the early morning are assembled to meet their Ascended Lord. But in whose company do we gather there? No one on earth can accomplish the great Act which is consummated there. We believe that the Holy Spirit is present in these mysteries, so that the bread and wine may become, for us, what Jesus Christ declared they should become, the Body and Blood of our Lord. And when we come to the individual character, the individual life, the hymn which we so often sing tells us what we owe to the Holy Spirit, when we confess that

> "Every virtue we possess,
> And every conquest won,
> And every thought of holiness,
> Are His alone."

Lest we, then, lose ourselves in the greatness of our theme, let us select out of the titles of the Holy Spirit the simplest, and yet the most winning, to meditate upon. And there is no title which is more often given to Him and no title which comes more easily home to a sorrow-stricken world than the title of the "Comforter."

It will not take long nor need many words to

prove the world's need of comfort. My memory goes back to a time, now many years ago, when, as a newly-ordained deacon, I was called upon to watch through the night by the side of a little dying child. The doctor had done what he could, and had left the child for me to tend. Hour after hour of the night passed, and at last she could only say, "Oh dear!" "Oh dear!" over and over again. I spoke to her, held her hand, prayed by her; and at last, in the early morning, she passed away. But the worst part had not come. The mother came next day. She lived in the country, far away from telegrams, and, though the telegram had gone as quickly as might be, she arrived too late. Never to my dying day shall I forget taking that mother into the dead-house of the infirmary to see her dead child. As she looked at the face of the child, whom she had parted with but a few weeks before, a shriek of absolute anguish rang from her lips. "My little lamb! My little lamb!" I would ask you to consider what you would have said to her that morning. Or, picture a young wife, such as one whom I know, to whom the news has come that her husband has died in the war. There will be a great home-coming for others, but there will

be no home-coming to give her joy. Imagine yourself sitting in her room. Where she is left alone with the children, her life simply cut in half, and years of life apparently to look forward to. What can you say to her? Or it is a man this time of whom we will think. He has waited year after year, till he has money enough to marry the girl he loved. At last he makes a home. They have lived one short year together, and now—— Can it be, is it really, her body that they are lowering into the grave? Is it really true that never again, not if he lives to be an old man, will he ever see that face on earth again? You want to comfort him. Yes, sorrows like these are happening every day, and they drive home for us the conviction, that if there is one thing which the world needs, it is a Comforter; and if there is one hymn which expresses more perfectly than another the cry of our hearts, it is the one which mingles with its praise the prayer:

"Thou art gone up on high,
To mansions in the skies;
And round Thy throne unceasingly
The songs of praise arise;
But we are lingering here,
With sin and care oppress'd;
Lord, send Thy promised Comforter,
And lead us to Thy rest."

And if we turn and look at things from another side, we are brought to the same conclusion. There are three things absolutely essential to true comfort: First, the comfort must be very tender. We talk of the light hand of a skilful surgeon, but it is nothing to the lightness of touch with which the Comforter heals our wounds. We are not dealing now with cut arteries or veins, or twisted ligaments: we have to do with broken hearts; we have to do with something that feels the very lightest touch, and therefore the first element which we seek in comfort is that it should descend as gently as the dew, that its touch may be as the touch of the lightest finger-tip on the awful wound. Then, secondly, besides soothing, comfort must bring with it some power to heal. I may be speaking, perhaps, to some who have often had to try and comfort. Is it not true that, as you come to each new wound, there is not one quite like another? You bring, perhaps almost with confidence, something which healed another wound; but lo! this one refuses to accept the healing. You feel round the torn part with all the tenderness which is in you; you think of something you can drop in to heal that dreadful sorrow, and you feel certain of this: that unless, besides

soothing, you can close the gaping mouth of the wound, you have done nothing to comfort. And then, thirdly, when you have soothed and healed, you have failed unless you have also strengthened that soul to go out into the work and duty of life. There is a touching picture, which some of you may know, drawn by one of our great poets, where the shepherd-boy David is trying by his music to comfort the afflicted soul of the poor King. Saul leans hopelessly against the pole of his tent, with a terrible depression upon him, and the shepherd-boy brings his music to try and comfort him. He tries the song of the reapers; then he tries the song of men standing by men in fellowship; then he pictures—

"The wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock!
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water."

And Saul gradually takes one piece of comfort after another. But there is one thing more he has to do. The shepherd-boy says to himself:

"He saith, 'It is good,' still he drinks not; he lets me praise life,
Gives assent, yet would die for his own part."

That is the stage you have reached when you have

brought the man or woman to be soothed, healed, but not yet strengthened. The full meaning of the description of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter is that He is one who strengthens, who sends back the sufferer into the battle of life brave and strong to take up his cross, to go to the duty which lies next to him, and with firm, determined face to take his part in the work of the world. And when we have thought out all that comforting means, are we not driven to see that we cannot do it ourselves? God bless the friends that come to us in trouble, and God reward them for their forgiving faces, thinking nothing of our faults, only trying with tender hands to comfort us! But when we try to give comfort ourselves, are we not conscious of how badly we do it? We see that the thing which the world wants is Someone to give perfectly what we give badly—consolation, comfort, strength to the souls of men.

Now, that is exatcly the gift of which Whit Sunday assures us, so that we can keep Whitsuntide with this magnificent service of praise and thanksgiving. The truth of Whit Sunday is this: that on this day was sent from heaven One who was *par excellence* the Comforter; that He has not gone back, that He is at work on earth now;

and that, in consequence of His work, no heart can be completely broken, no mind on earth entirely distraught, and no soul need wander unhelped into the darkness of despair.

Mark, first, the influence of the Comforter on the Apostles themselves. They had been anxious, troubled, irresolute, feeling as if they had lost their hold upon everything which they trusted. But, after the first Whitsuntide, we can see that a great change has passed over them. They have been not only healed and soothed, but strengthened. They have been transformed by the power of the Comforter into the world's Apostles; they are preaching the Gospel everywhere, and they will preach on till they die.

Notice next, as you look around you on life, some woman, perhaps, who seemed years ago to have lost everything that made life worth living. But now she has learned to believe in the Holy Ghost. How do you find her to-day? Do you find her morbid, depressed, inactive, a burden to everybody? I will venture to say, if you have eyes to see, you will find her constantly just the reverse—calm, quiet, of service to everybody. Men, women, little children rise up and call her blessed. She is a power among the people in

whose neighbourhood she lives, and a blessing every day. Who has healed her? By whose power does she live her life? She would tell you herself that this is the influence of the Comforter. The Comforter came into her soul, and by the power of the Spirit, and only by the power of the Spirit, she lives her life to-day. Ask that great army of triumphant sufferers who have existed since the Church began, and they will tell you: "We cannot analyse it, we cannot explain it, we cannot pretend to say how it was; but this we know, that the scar which you can see is the mark of a terrible wound, which is painless now; there did come something like the soft dew down upon our hearts. There did come into our souls some Divine strength—by what means we hardly know—and we stand to-day and do our work, living our lives day by day by the power of the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

Well, my friends, if that is true, who is the most foolish man or woman in this cathedral this afternoon? I say, the man or woman who is trying to live in this sorrow-stricken world without the Comforter. How are we to be in constant touch with Him? First, by remembering that He is not someone who comes *instead* of Jesus Christ.

The Comforter

I believe that many fail to grasp the glorious truth of Whit Sunday because they imagine that they are asked to set someone instead of the Saviour in their hearts. But Jesus said: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." He said, and implied through His teaching, that He was to come a second time through the power of the Spirit; and that, just as some glorious breeze that blows over spice islands comes to us retaining all the fragrance of the spices and the flowers over which that breeze has blown, so the Holy Spirit, coming from Jesus, and being sent by Him and by the Father, comes to us to-day for our consolation, fragrant with the sympathy, full of the life and laden with the comfort of Jesus Christ Himself. And, therefore, the first step towards a perfect fellowship with Christ and the Father is to kneel down to-day, this Whit Sunday, and bow ourselves before the power of the Comforter.

And, secondly, we must remember the frequent misunderstanding of that verse: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." People imagine sometimes that this implies that a spiritual religion is a spasmodic religion—has no rule, no regular religious

life; that the really spiritual man is a man of impulse. But does the wind blow after that manner? There is nothing in the universe which moves by such perfect law as the wind. Anyone who has the knowledge requisite can tell us why every wind blows across the sky. It is all controlled by perfect law, and therefore, if there is one thing more than another in which the Holy Spirit is like the wind, it is because He observes a law of perfect order. There may be some who have given up their regular time for prayer; there may be some who imagine that to come to regular worship is unnecessary for a spiritual man, who despise Baptism and Confirmation, and never come to the Holy Communion. It is not surprising that they should find themselves uncomforted, if they are not in full touch with the power of the Comforter. For it is His revealed will to use the means of grace, and to come through outward and visible signs to give His comfort to the souls of men. I say, Come back to your prayers; come back to the things you have despised. You said, perhaps, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" Yes; but how much have they healed you? How much has your worldly wisdom healed your soul?

Come back, like a little child, to your daily prayer; come back to your Communion; come back to your regular church, and you will find the comfort of God the Holy Ghost steal into your soul in a way you have not known for years.

And, lastly, be not content with anything less than to be an instrument in the hands of the Holy Ghost. It is a glorious prospect—and everyone may have it,—the hope of being an instrument in the hands of the Comforter! Why was St. Barnabas the Son of Consolation? Because he was full of the Holy Ghost. And if there is one more glorious life than another, it is to be at the service of the Spirit, and to be a comfort to the world through the power of the Holy Ghost. The world wants comforting. Be not content with being comforted yourself, but comfort others with the comfort wherewith you yourself have been comforted of God. And so we take home the same message which the Apostles had of old: "Tarry in Jerusalem till ye be clothed with power from on high." We wait to-day for the same blessing and the same gifts for which they waited of old. May He come down upon us with all His old power! may He clothe us with all His old comfort, and send us out, a band of comforters,

to comfort a sorrowing world, until the day shall come when the sun will never set except upon a world at peace with God, and when every sorrowful heart shall be daily filled with the balm of the Holy Ghost the Comforter!

VI

THINGS SEEN AND UNSEEN

"The things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. iv. 18.

ONE of the deepest longings of the human heart is for something that will last, and the longing is deepened as year by year the experience of life reveals how many things are transitory which seem lasting. Take, for instance, the passing of the glorious summer which has just come to an end. Put yourself back in imagination into one of those days of early August, when even the hardest-worked Londoner got, at any rate, a few days' holiday. How regular and apparently permanent was the sunshine! how soft and yet steady was the summer breeze! what a beautiful pageant the world presented as we looked across the sea and saw the ships in the distance, with their white sails gleaming in the light, or

watched the cows grazing in the deep green of some shady valley in the country! But like a beautiful scroll it is all rolled up and passed away. Shortening evenings and falling leaves, raging storms and bitter winds, are reminding us by this time that the summer is a thing of the past.

But, brethren, if Nature teaches us this lesson, how much more pathetically is it taught us by the passing away of happiness! Take some poor widow—left a widow after ten or fifteen years of perfect happiness. Her time of joy seemed so strong and stable; it was apparently given by God and lived in God; one by one children were added to her store of blessing, deepening the tie between her and him whom she loved so well, and then suddenly a cloud like a man's hand appeared in the horizon; it came nearer and nearer; some unsuspected ailment was discovered. It was thought at first to be nothing, but it showed unexpected strength, and then the suspicion grew upon her like a horrible nightmare. Can it really mean that she is to be alone? Can it really mean that she is to be a widow, that she is to lose *him?* Is she to be left alone with the children? without him, the strong stay and comforter? No one to consult with, no one to talk

to about the little ones! It seems too horrible to be true, but the cloud gets bigger, draws nearer, and the fair summer of life is broken up; the heavens are filled with winds and rains. Her happiness rolls up like a scroll, and when the storm has passed she is alone with the children in a world of winter; her happiness was passing after all. And so, again, it is with life itself. Few of us really believe for a long time that we are dying men and women. We know it in a way, we believe it as an abstract fact, that one day there will be a funeral procession like those we have so often seen, but it will differ from all other funeral processions in that it will be bearing *our* body to its grave; that there will be a mound in some cemetery one day differing from all other mounds in that it will be *our* grave; and that the world will go on the day after we are dead just as it did the day before; that there will be the same cries in the street, and the same salutations in the market-place, and that after our own generation has gone we shall be absolutely forgotten—as absolutely forgotten, so far as this world is concerned, as if we had never lived at all. All this, though we know it in the abstract to be at least as certain as that the sun

will rise to-morrow, we ignore, we manage to forget, until we suddenly wake up to the consciousness that we cannot do quite as much work as once we did, that things tire us which never used to tire us, that our sight is failing us, that old weaknesses recur more often than they were wont, and the abstract proposition that we are all mortal becomes translated into the concrete fact, "I must die, and soon."

And as these experiences pass over a man's soul they deepen his longing for something permanent. Is the conclusion of the whole matter, he asks, to be the pessimistic conclusion of the wise man of old, "As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth to me, and why was I then more wise?" Is all prayer, effort and struggle unavailing? When scroll after scroll is rolled up of natural beauty, of earthly happiness and life itself, is there anything permanent and lasting left at all? It is well, then, to study very carefully St. Paul's philosophy of life, and we notice that he draws a careful distinction between things that are seen and things that are not seen, and makes this striking assertion about them: "The things that are seen are temporal, and the things that are not seen are

eternal." What does he mean? And, further, what does he *not* mean? He does not mean and cannot mean any disrespect to the beautiful world in which we live. St. Paul was far too healthy-minded a man to rail at a summer day because it does not last, or to depreciate the beautiful home in which the great God has placed us here because this, some day, has to make way for another; he was far too human to depreciate friendship or love because there are partings and families are broken up. He was not so much absorbed in the thought of death as to forget the warmth, the majesty and the mystery of being alive at all, and, therefore, those completely travesty St. Paul's philosophy of life who fix their eyes so exclusively on another world that they take no interest in this, or who are so absorbed in thinking of the God whom they have not seen that they have no eyes to see and care for the brother whom they have seen. No, he calls these things, not unimportant, but temporal. And what he means evidently is this: that underneath the seen and passing things, here and now and in our midst, is a world of unseen reality; that heaven lies about us, not only, as the poet says, "in our infancy," but all our days; that these unseen realities make

use of the seen, but exist independently of them; that it is possible as we walk the earth day by day to have our head above the mists in heaven; that our calling is to be eternal beings in a world of time, and that the real test of the use of life is what life leaves us when it has passed away.

It becomes, then, brethren, the most vital question in the world for us all: "What are these unseen realities which use nature and earthly happiness and life, and yet do not pass with them?" And first, undoubtedly, as summing up all the rest, we must name the unseen God at work. I do not know how it is with you, my friends, but to me life is a different thing when once we believe that God is really at work in our midst. This great belief certainly changes our view of the Church, of history, and of Nature; but to-day I would only seek to show that it changes entirely the individual life. A just, living, stern, yet faithful God at work on the individual life! It is scarcely too much to say that nothing matters if this is true. See what a difference it makes at once to each individual member of this congregation. You entered the church, perhaps, with a feeling of desolation of being alone in London;

you have come up, perhaps, from the country for the winter's work, and you are feeling a strain in this great Metropolis. Now change the point of view. You are a beloved child in the hands of a strong and living God. Have you not passed at a bound from the seen to the unseen, from the temporal to the eternal? You came to church feeling the sport of the waves of this troublesome world; at any moment misfortune might overtake you, a trial overwhelm you, death sweep you away. If you believe in this first unseen reality you are anchored to a rock in the midst of this troublesome world, where no trouble can touch you, where no chance can ruin you, and no death can disturb you for more than a moment. If it were only your own hands which held God you might be insecure, but God has a hold of you with a grasp so firm, with a pressure so steady, that no man or devil can pluck you out of your Father's hands. Now, do we believe this? If not, why not?

I believe, from experience, that if we do not believe it the reasons are mainly three: First, the impossibility of believing that the same unseen Power can give his undivided attention to each individual at each moment. There are so many millions, we say, of people all wanting His care.

Secondly, we are impressed by the apparent chance according to which so many things happen in the world; and, thirdly, we are daunted by the apparent failure which often seems the ending, if not of our own lives, at least of lives which by hypothesis were as carefully guided as our own.

But to understand these difficulties we must recall the second unseen reality which persists under all changes, and that unseen thing, as invisible as the invisible God, is the character of man. If you come to think of it we never really see each other. We note what a man says, we see what he does, we watch how he acts, but we never see *him*. The man is out of sight behind appearances.

> "Thy body at its best—
> How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?"

But, because unseen, character is permanent. The character of man is affected by everything and destroyed by nothing. The unseen God at work upon the unseen character of man—here is a reality which underlies the changes and chances of this passing world. What a dignity it gives to life! It makes no difference henceforward whether we are poor or rich, famous or unknown; character, not riches, is the object of life, and the pauper will

be numbered with the princes, for the aristocracy of character is the only aristocracy which lasts beyond the grave. How it robs a trial of its bitterness if the object of existence is not happiness, but holiness! No wonder trial comes to us; it comes to burn out the dross, and purge and purify the gold. We do not mind falling into the hand of God, if we are sure it is the hand of God. "It is good for me to have been troubled that I may learn Thy statutes." That is the cry of the soul that has looked past the apparent uselessness of pain to the unseen purpose which it serves. What a stern yet inspiring object it gives to life! Everything becomes tremendously worth while: it is worth while to make friends, for they last for ever; it is worth while to work for others, for their characters all go on beyond the grave; it is worth while to take trouble with ourselves, for we make or mar something which to all eternity will reveal the marks of what we do or leave undone.

And that brings us, brethren, to the very difficulties which bar our way to this belief. First, is it conceivable that the infinite God can care for the finite son of man? I answer: Is it conceivable that He does not? A great general is the one who, while he plans the whole scheme of a campaign,

knows each bridge by which the scouts can retreat, and the exact spot where the attacking force can scale the heights. A great biologist is a man who carries in his head the details of every form of life that he has observed, and ever has his eye open to note the smallest variety on the bird's wing or the fish's fin. And yet these are finite men. Is it conceivable that the infinite God is not great with the true greatness which can hold the details together with the principle, and, while He can control the movements of the planets, can also count the very hairs of every child whom he has made? As so often happens, it is not the reason, it is the imagination which cannot grasp this great conception. The reason would tell us that, if there is a God at all worth the name, it must be so; every individual must be a thought of God, and there is no reason for contradicting revelation when it adds that each single character is an object of His never-ceasing care.

But, again, why do so many things seem to be left to chance? If an unseen God is working out His unseen will, what room is there for chance at all? And the answer is a very simple one: There is no room, for there is no such thing as chance. If the nineteenth century has taught us nothing

else, towards its close it has taught us this—the universality of the reign of law. The wildest hurricane, the most unexpected earthquake, the slow progress of cancer—all work with the force of undeviating law. And the sole difference on this point between a Christian and an unbeliever is this: that whereas the one believes the law to be directed by no person in particular, the Christian believes the law to be in the hands of a Person who is working out through it a higher law of life, as the poet Browning declares in his terse epigram, "All's love, but all's law."

But why, then, thirdly, are there any moral failures if the unseen God is at work on the character of man? It may be urged in that case that nothing can go wrong; the potter moulds the clay, and it is his fault if the vessel is a bad one. Yes, if it were clay which he is moulding; but what if the material itself is semi-Divine? What if the character itself begins in God's image, and in His likeness, however many years of subsequent training it may need before it is fully complete? What if the essential part of that character is its moral freedom and responsibility, so that to force it to be good is to break His image? Then even God Himself must will and influence and persuade

—never force. Then there will always be the possibility that man may defy the purpose of the unseen God, prefer the seen to the unseen, the temporal to the eternal, and throw away with his own hands the birthright of an eternity with God. There is no hell revealed except for those who, as our Saviour says, have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

How, then, are we to live this unseen and eternal life in the midst of a visible and passing world? Not, certainly, by proud isolation from the interests of this world; not, certainly, by pharisaical contempt of others, or by a gloomy depreciation of the joys of life. On the contrary, no one ought to be so bright or helpful, so cheerful under trouble, so brave under difficulties, as a child of light on whom the sun of God's love ever shines, and whose angel always beholds the face of our Father which is in heaven. But the secret of his strength will be this, and the answer to our question comes in strangely familiar words: "his life is hid with Christ in God."

First, by perpetual prayer, he begins to rise, and again he rises higher through the mists, and suns himself in the presence of an unfailing light which never wanes. If we have given up our

prayers, if we have become careless about them, and even done away with them, or if we hurry them over as mere forms—if so, then on this first of October, ere the winter half of the year begins, go back to prayer; go back to the perpetual summer—prayer; go up with Moses regularly into the mount to pray, and you will come down with the glory on your face, though it needs perpetual renewal from the countenance of God Himself.

Secondly, live by eternal principle. Whatever else you may at this moment doubt you will never doubt this—you cannot—that right is right, and wrong is wrong. Many of us in our days of doubt have clung to that. Live by that eternal principle until further light appears. They that will to do the will of God shall at last know the doctrine whether it be of God. As further light appears, and clearer outlines of the eternal hills stand out, mark them and shape your course by them. They will lead you out of the marshy ground and the mists which fill it to the heights of God Himself, whose righteousness standeth like a strong mountain, and whose judgments are like to the great deep.

And, lastly, work with the eternal God. After

all, nothing is so binding as common work, and nothing so lifts work out of the temporal and transitory as the idea of being fellow-workers with the eternal God. Work with Him as He moulds your own character; co-operate with His grace, and He will then be able to give you grace for grace; work with Him in your own homes, make it easier for the children and the servants to live there the life of God; work with Him in the wider world outside your home, and advance inch by inch the frontier of the kingdom of God. And what will be the result to ourselves if, in however inadequate a way, we try to live on earth the eternal life of heaven? Let me answer by parable. In Scotland a few weeks ago, on a gloomy hill, wrapped in shadow, we were beating up against a storm with the rain falling full on us, and yet in front of us lay a land of apparently perpetual sunshine; the hills stood out clear and bright in the light, the sea crept smiling to their feet. It was like a view of the Delectable Mountains which the weary pilgrims saw. But it all seemed afar off, as though belonging to another world. The sight of the sun seemed almost to mock us as we fought on through the storm. Presently the wind ceased, the storm rolled away, the sun poured

down upon us, our gloomy hill itself shone with light. We could not reach the happy vision, but the happy vision had come to us. And it was God's sunshine which had worked the change.

Addresses on Special Occasions

I

ST. LUKE'S GUILD*

"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."—St. Matt. ix. 35.

IT sometimes happens that two branches of what is really one family drift apart until they almost forget their common ancestry; in each generation misunderstandings, slight in themselves, widen the breach; stories against one another are repeated and believed, simply from the want of opportunity for mutual explanation, until it comes to pass that two sets of people with the same founder, the same blood, the same traditions, and largely the same aim in life, stand apart from one another in a state of aloofness and suspicion,

* Preached at the Annual Service for Physicians and Surgeons on the eve of St. Luke's Day, 1899.

instead of marching shoulder to shoulder with the full confidence of brothers in a common work.

Now, far be it from me to assert that this is an accurate picture of the relations between the two great professions to which you and I, my brothers, respectively belong; but, on the other hand, few will deny that there is not always that complete accord, that perfect confidence and mutual trust which should exist between two bodies of men descended from a common Founder, and carrying on two different sides of one common work.

In the passage I have taken for our text, we have a touching picture of Jesus Christ engaged upon His double task; He went about all the cities and villages, the prototype of the parish priest, teaching in the synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, but also the prototype of the good physician, healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

That He is the prototype of our clerical profession no one would deny; whatever views may be held about Apostolical succession, everyone would admit that the parish priest of to-day is carrying on the task left him by Jesus Christ, that, as he goes up and down the slums of a great city, or ministers to the needs of the

cottagers in some country village, he is following the steps of Jesus Christ, as He taught in the synagogues and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. But the point I would press home on you this evening is this: that you, surgeons and physicians, in a Christian country, are as really carrying on in your way this work; that you are going up and down the same cities and same villages, sent by the same Master, responsible to the same Lord, and united to us by this wonderful bond; that you are doing the other half of one common work, "healing every sickness and every disease among the people."

Of course, I have no wish to deny or underrate the difficulties which are felt about our Master's cures; they are naturally felt even more strongly by you than by any other body of thinking men; you are so accustomed to trace the subtle connection between cause and effect, so trained to accept no result without making scientifically sure of what produced it, that undoubtedly these miracles of healing must present a special difficulty to your minds, and I would suggest—though it only be in passing—three sources of comfort to those for whom they possibly may present a standing difficulty to-day.

1. The mystery of life itself. After all the volumes which have been written about life, am I not right in saying that no one yet knows what life is? Herbert Spencer can define it for us, as perfect correspondence to environment; but does that really tell us what is the difference between a living man and a corpse? It is not too much to say that no break in the uniformity of nature can be so remarkable as that which took place when this mysterious thing we call life either gradually or suddenly appeared. And yet all believe in life. Does not the very mysteriousness of life itself hush our voices as to what may be possible when life is in the hands of One, whom, as Christians, we believe to be the Lord of life?

2. That Jesus Christ did many and wonderful works is one of the best attested facts recorded about Him. We have outlived the days when it used to be supposed that if the Gospels could be traced back to some elementary story underlying them all, it would be discovered that the original story contained no miracles, but that these miracles were the later accretions of an age which had idealised its hero. As a matter of fact, it is the most original story which is the most full of miracles; one of the clearest things recorded

about Jesus Christ is that He was a healer ; the very discourses so hinge upon the miracles that it is impossible to tear them away, and instead of these cures being a later accretion which can be thrown over without injury to the fabric of the story, they are an integral part of the fabric itself.

3. Again—and this is, perhaps, the most striking evidence of all—everyone to-day unites in praising Jesus Christ as the Great Philanthropist. When Hospital Sunday comes round, Church and Chapel vie in showing how hospitals followed the track of Christianity across Europe, and it is a well-known historical fact that for the first thousand years of Christianity every hospital in Europe had for its house-governor the Bishop of the diocese. But why this immense and unanimous belief in Christ's philanthropy? why this effluence of healing in memory of the Great Healer? It can only be because these miracles of healing, from the very earliest days, were ascribed to His power. He did no cures except miraculous cures ; He healed no one, so far as we know, by the art of medicine or of surgery, and, though we are right in holding that He did it all by the knowledge of some higher law than we know yet, and that all miracles will be seen some day to be, like all other things

in God's universe, "according to law," yet it was the very knowledge and the practical use of this higher law which, among other things, stamped Him as more than man.

I take it, then, as proved that in the double work of Jesus Christ, recorded in our text, the second half was as real as the first. "He taught in the synagogue, and preached the Gospel of the kingdom," and "He also healed every sickness and every disease among the people."

What follows, then, from this? This follows: that a scarcely less solemn commission rests on you than rests on us. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you"—that is the high commission under which we priests of religion start on our work to heal the soul. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you"—that is also the glorious command under which you go forward—priests, too, of suffering humanity, stewards, too, of all your stores of healing art, ministers, too, of the most high God—to carry out your mission of mercy and kindness to the ends of the earth.

It is the forgetfulness, on the part of some, of the sacredness of your great vocation, and the divorce of healing from religion, which has led in our day to the popularity—passing and ephemeral, as I

believe it is—of what is called Christian Science. Every heresy lives by the grain of truth which it contains, just as every schism in the Christian Church has arisen to call attention to some forgotten truth. We have learnt to see this fact and cordially accept it in the religious world, and in this spirit you yourselves must judge concerning what you rightly look upon in its practical results as a mischievous heresy. The grain of truth which Christian science contains is its appeal to the sacredness of the healing art; it is an appeal, expressed in however mistaken a fashion, made to the great Healer Himself. "You have forgotten," they say, "whence healing comes; you have forgotten the rock whence ye are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged; you have become materialist men ministering to an unbelieving age; we go back to Christ; we go back to the Good Physician; but for the want of faith in Him cures would be worked as of old on the bodies as well as on the souls of men." That is what they say, and the true answer is to be given, not by the bandying of texts backwards and forwards, not even by the frank recognition of the influence of the mind upon the body, especially in neurotic cases, not even by pointing to the

damning evidence of the death which in serious cases follows such treatment or want of treatment, and which no sophistry can explain, but by true reconsecration of medicine and surgery, by the reclaiming of the healing art for Christ, by the reuniting into one great brotherhood again the ministers of the soul and the ministers of the body, as sent forth together on their high mission by the one Master of them both.

In what way, then, to come to practical details, can the two professions draw closer to one another? I speak out of a happy experience of perhaps exceptionally affectionate relations with the doctors of the district in every quarter, town and country, in which I happen to have worked myself.

In the first place, I think that we clergy ought to understand and to respect that love of accurate observation and faithfulness to scientific truth which is or ought to be the special characteristic of a good doctor. Who can read such a book as the "Origin of Species" without a deep reverence for the enormous industry, the accurate observation, and the careful verifying of every theory by comparison with ascertained facts which characterised the great Darwin? And if such training in the case of doctors makes them slower

to accept and more painfully to verify the truths of religion, we ought to sympathise and understand.

In the second place, we must remember that the great use made of the analytic reason tends, as it did in the case of Darwin himself, to atrophy the imagination, and that, just as our temptation as priests of the soul is to dwell too exclusively on the emotional side of man's nature, so your temptation, my brothers, is to leave out the cultivation of its imaginative side altogether, whereas, as a matter of fact, the eye of the soul, which sees truth, must comprise the imagination, the formative powers of the brain, as well as the analytic reason ; poetry, music, the stories of great deeds help to keep alive the man within us, and prevent him from drifting into the drudge, and it is to the man, not to the drudge, that religion speaks.

So, again, and I merely touch on these points, as I am addressing doctors, not clergymen, we should remember how difficult it is for a busy man, with cases which involve life or death constantly upon him, to be as regular as others at religious services, and to make more allowances than we are apt to do for inconstant attendance ;

for nothing tends to make a man really irreligious so much as being unfairly looked upon as irreligious.

But if in this way we towards you might show some brotherly understanding, on the other hand you towards us might show the same.

In the first place, we, too, have a science, the science of theology, as difficult and as delicate as your science of surgery and medicine. You are rightly indignant if one of us strays across the border which divides theology and medicine, and lays down the law in a department of which he knows nothing; but is it quite unknown for even a distinguished biologist or physician to forget that his training in biology or medicine does not necessarily qualify him to lay down the law in the region of theology? "Two babies were born last night: they were both weakly; one was baptized, not the other, but I don't suppose it made much difference"—so I once heard a doctor say with half a sneer to a young curate. But, mark this—our reasons for believing in the use of baptism are in their way as scientific as your own belief in vaccination; it is founded on the command of our common Master, who was so entirely opposed to formalism that He would never have laid down

as a necessary part of His religion a useless form; and the knowledge of what the Church holds and what it does not hold on the subject, the piecing together of the various Scriptural assertions on which its belief is founded, the reasonableness of some definite sign of admission into a holy society, the new state of privilege to which such admission leads, the new responsibilities involved, the safe-guarding that the child shall understand what they are by the institution of god-parents, the special grace of baptism as distinguished from confirmation—all these things want study and careful thought and balanced statement as much as any scientific truth which may be taught in the hospitals to-day; and if this is true of such an elementary truth as baptism, how much more is it true of the evidence for the Resurrection, the reasonableness of prayer, the true doctrine of the Holy Communion, and the reconciliation of such a fact as the Atonement, with the justice of God on the one hand and the permanence of man's character on the other?

So, again, do you make enough allowance for our practical difficulties in teaching? You go into some country church, and you hear some simple explanation of the Gospel of the day

addressed to the simple village folk who may be present; it touches none of your difficulties, and you make up your mind that the parson of the place is a man behind the times, who could not possibly help you in your own difficulties, whereas, if you gave him your confidence, you would often find that he would only too gladly give you by yourself strong meat for men, although, well educated and intellectually keen as he was, he had perforce to give in church milk to babes.

And, again, from the practical point of view, have you ever thought what a strength and lift it would be to some struggling parish priest, who may come into your district to carry on a difficult work, if you as a Christian layman, as a Churchman of his church, went to him and gave him, especially in his opening years, that moral support which you by experience of the district and your standing with the people enabled you to give?

Forgive me, my friends, if I seem to descend to trivial details; but it is only, after all, in details that anything can be done, and my heart's desire is that the priests of the soul and the priests of the body to the suffering humanity of England shall once more be united under the Master who has sent them both.

St. Luke's Guild

There are many things which tend to unite us if we will only let them. First, the sufferer himself. We tread on one another's heels time after time, do we not, in the cities and villages of to-day. "Please, sir, the doctor is with him now." or, "The clergyman will be here directly." How often we hear that, do we not, on our rounds, and how gladly each of us should respect and reverence one another's work! How well I can recollect in my first curacy how the young surgeon in the infirmary in which I was chaplain shared with me his interest and anxiety over his first operation for tracheotomy, with what delight we watched the child recover, and how, when the child had been taken home, he would walk off on Sunday twelve miles into the country to be able to report to me on his return progress towards the complete cure. Yes; the sufferer holds the hand of each and joins us together.

Then, again, we are united by the presence of death, in which we both so constantly stand. We do ill if it hardens us, if it makes us careless, irreverent or flippant; it ought to maintain in us both a sense of the shortness of life and the inevitable judgment; it ought to force upon us the constant question, What is the purpose of

life? Something, it must be, which lasts beyond death, or all human effort is most obviously futile and unsatisfying. The same dead face which we have both tended ought to speak to us a message which tends to make us one.

And, lastly, and above all, we have in many cases, if not in most, the bond of a common faith. It is appropriate and natural that you should make St. Luke a kind of patron saint, for in his own person, like his Master, he has joined the doctor and the Evangelist, and we think with a grateful memory to-day of one, just passed to his rest, who fulfilled a like office in our own time. "Dr. Hicks, the late Bishop of Bloemfontein," writes one of the highest officials of your guild, "was the only Fellow of the College of Physicians in Holy Orders, and we delighted to have such a man in our body; we all loved and venerated him. His death on the very day war broke out in the Orange Free State was a touching thing; it seemed as if his work for the present was over. He was one of those saintly men whose influence went out and touched all who came in contact with it, and the Church can very ill afford to spare such men." May I endorse on behalf of those in Orders in the Church these words, which

truly describe a man who in his own person joins us both together?

A common faith—that is our bond which we have met in this cathedral church to cement; for to draw near to Christ is to draw near to one another. May God bless the work of the St. Luke's Guild, which seeks to keep before the eyes of all the lofty vocation of a Christian doctor and the power through which alone that vocation may be fulfilled! God bless the medical missions which it seeks to foster, the hostel which it hopes to start to give them a greater impulse, and the dispensaries in connection with mission work at home to which it sends some of its most distinguished members.

Go forth, then, to your work, my brothers—and may I welcome by a single word the presence of those who not many years ago would not have been found in such an assemblage, by adding also "my sisters"—determined to be men and women of prayer, to rise in the morning in time to consecrate your busy day to the Master who has given you the work to do and sent you to do it. Lift up your hearts in intercession for the patients whom you tend, even if this must needs be done in the carriage which takes you from place to place; draw near to Christ in the closest way of all, in

the blessed Communion of His body and blood, which He instituted as much for those who tend the body as those who tend the soul; refuse to take any but the highest ideal of what your glorious work may be, and pray that, as you lay down at last your great commission, and give back the trust committed to your charge, you may hear as the reward of your life's work: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

II

GOD'S JUSTICE*

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
GEN. xviii. 25.

OUR thoughts naturally turn to-day to justice. When the chief representatives of justice in our land solemnly in procession enter the house of God, it is something more than an interesting ceremony; it is something more, even, than the acknowledgment on behalf of a great profession of the majesty of God. What we see to-day is the justice of man covering itself in the shadow of the justice of God.

We need to stay ourselves upon this certainty of the justice of Almighty God. Our brothers who are worshipping with us to-day would be the first to say how difficult justice is; how anxiously they have to think over the cases which come

* Preached before Her Majesty's Judges, June, 1900.

before them; how carefully they have to balance this fact and that fact, how painfully to weigh one piece of evidence against another; and although the thought, if allowed too much scope, would positively paralyse them in the discharge of their duties, yet how often they must be conscious of the fallibility of human justice after all. As believers in God, and still more in God as revealed in Christ, how often must they fall back on the Divine justice, and beg that omniscient Being who has seen every case which comes before them from the beginning to the end, who can read human hearts with a clearness of which we know nothing—the God of Judgment, as He is called in the Bible, by whom actions are weighed—to aid them with His supernatural wisdom, and grant that as their day, so shall their strength be. The cry of their hearts must often be the old-world cry of Abraham: "We are weak, fallible men ourselves; we can but do our best, but shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

But it is not only those concerned with the administration of justice who fall back upon the justice of God; I expect that if we knew the truth about one another's souls, we should find out that it is a belief in the justice of God which

is saving many a poor soul even in this congregation from despair. "God will right me some day," is the cry of some poor man who has had apparently everything against him all his life, who lost his last situation through an unjust accusation which he could not rebut, and who sees his wife and children growing poorer and shabbier and less well-fed every day, and yet, as far as he can see, from no fault at all of his own. There are many people in the world who seem to have nothing left but the justice of God.

And even with us common people with our ordinary lives, who have no special sense of injustice, I doubt if you could rob us of a more precious possession than of our belief in the justice of God. Think for a moment of the meaning of that awful title Judge of *all the earth*. We feel that to judge this congregation would be the task of a giant intellect, to judge London would be the work of a demi-god, but to *judge the world*, to have the ultimate decision of the fate of every soul—Anglo-Saxon, German, Jew, Russian, French, Italian, Hindoo, Chinese, including the 800 million heathen who know not God as revealed in Christ; and not only those on earth now, but all who have ever lived—our

brain reels if we try to think for a moment what this means. But, still, though we cannot measure it, there is not one believing Christian here to-day who is not quietly resting—as under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land—beneath the justice of God, ultimately to be demonstrated before the whole world, but at work now. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" However puzzling things seem, if He is anything, He must be just. He seems to leave the righteous forsaken, and his seed sometimes beg their bread; but we say to ourselves that, one day, He will be justified in His sayings and clear when He is udgjed. If we could demonstrate the *injustice* of God, we men should be indeed most miserable.

And yet—there is no denying it—it is possible to make out a very plausible case against the justice of God. In open-air debates and discussions after lectures in East London, infinitely the hardest thing to defend with regard to God is His justice, and in our own hearts the debate must sometimes go on, even when there is none to suggest it from without. And the accuser, whether within or without, is apt to take one of three grounds, or all three together:

(1) The inequality in the fortunes of men;

(2) the vindictiveness and excessive nature of God's punishments; and (3) the alleged injustice of the Atonement—these are the three chief accusations against God, and it is perfectly true that if each or any of these points could be made good, a terrible blow would be struck at God's justice. If it could be proved against an earthly judge that he was habitually unfair in his awards, that his punishments displayed a vindictiveness and even savagery of nature, and yet that he allowed a perfectly innocent scapegoat to be sacrificed to his anger, and let the real culprit off scot free, it is clear that his character as a judge would be lost for ever.

1. Let us take, then, the first accusation as being the most obvious and most common—the inequality in the human lots, and we cannot do better than take as an illustration the death of Nance in that striking book of contrasting pictures which goes under the name of "5, John Street."

Nance had worked in a rubber factory. "The mixed naphtha fumes so pervade the general scheme of things in the factory," we read, "that everything reeks of them. The poor child brings what she calls the taste of them home to bed with her at night and rises with it in the morning. It

comes between her palate and all natural flavours, and gives a loathing for the kindly fruits of the earth. Nance carries her dinner to the factory and eats it there. While waiting to be eaten, it absorbs the vapours of the place; but the really odd thing," says the writer, "is that the only way to get so much as a morsel of it down is to serve it in the very room in which it has received the taint. Try to eat it outside, and the palate, revived by the fresher air, instantly rejects the nauseating dose." On a naturally weak girl the inevitable result follows: Nance is slowly poisoned.

"It was a tragic death," continues the writer, "for it was the death of a dot, a speck of humanity, an item of no account. *Nance's Maker owed Nance nothing*, and kept up the stern refusal to recognise any semblance of a claim to the last. She had been taught no faith, and death was to her 'the sense that the house of the body was a house falling in on all sides—the sense of the world spinning, spinning away from her, as the final hour drew nigh.' Not that she was leaving the world, but that the world was leaving her for its appointed track in space, while the wind of its mighty rush sang in her ears 'down the ringing grooves of change,' and all its warmth of life and

light faded off into the infinite, while she survived alone in the cold and dark. All she saw were the rapids with the fall in sight through a break in the black sky. The grip on the other factory girl's palm tightened as she balanced on the edge of the green water and saw the boiling foam beyond. There was blood trickling from her friend's palm where the nail had entered the flesh when all was done."

And then think how your daughter would have died—perhaps did die. We who know the slums, who have been with girls like that as they breathe out their young lives in some fœtid garret—we echo the sad saying of the old man who in his thinking could only arrive at this: "There's something in this world amiss." There certainly is, but our question for to-day goes no further than to ask whether it is the justice of God which is amiss? If we really think that God is directly responsible for human avarice and human selfishness, for poisonous trades carried on without proper safeguards for human life, and for rents taken for houses which are more fit for animals than men and women; then undoubtedly the inequality of opportunity in life, the inequality in the fortunes of men and women, is a grave

charge against the justice of God. But has it ever occurred to you, my friends, how easy it is to throw on God the responsibility which really lies upon ourselves? When God made us in His image, He made us in a real way His viceroys upon earth. As in politics it is the great justification of a wide franchise that responsibility exercises a creative influence upon those who possess it; so it is only what we may well expect, that having laid down certain broad principles of justice and equity, and having provided what, if properly arranged and distributed, is ample provision for this human family, God should leave to His children as part of the probation and training of their characters the task of distribution.

No one can deny the difficulty of it; no one has any right to underrate the difficulty of curing the shocking overcrowding of the slums of London to-day, but, on the other hand, no one has any right to deny that the death of girls like Nance is a preventible death; that all the accumulation of wealth is not justified if it is gathered at the cost of the sacrifice of young lives; that before we spend our money there comes a most important preliminary question as to how we make it; and that when we arrive at the distribution of it there

is only one law for Christians: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister."

"Where is Abel thy brother?" You were one of the minority; you had money, education, religious training, but there was a life linked with yours. It was lived in a slum, but it was the life of a child of God; what you had was in trust for him or her. Like two boys sent together to school, you had the journey money and the supplies; but if you have used them on yourself, he or she must be starving. "Where is Abel thy brother?" This is the question which the so-called unjust God rings in our ears. We may think to put Him off with the excuse, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" but He will denounce it again as He denounced it of old, as the excuse of a murderer; with inexorable justice He will demand to the last farthing an examination of our trust; with rigorous impartiality will He sum up the balance and ask it at our hands, and instead of too little justice, some of us may find that in God there is more justice than we like. Happy is the man who can answer thus: "Here am I, Lord, of Thine infinite mercy, and here is Abel my brother."

2. But probably an even commoner drawback

to a full trust in the justice of God is the idea that His punishments are vindictive. After my first lecture in Bethnal Green ten years ago, I invited two hundred working-men to choose the subject for the next Sunday. With one voice they chose "Eternal Punishment"; and it is one of the commonest accusations against the Gospels that they portray a Being delighting in vengeance, and casting the majority of the human race into torment, "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Now, in dealing with great subjects like these one can hardly do more than suggest headings for an answer; any one of these three objections to the justice of God would need not only a sermon, but an exhaustive lecture by itself. We may, however, roughly take as a safe rule for those who have no time to go deeply into the matter: "Throw overboard any theory of future punishment which conflicts with the dictates of your conscience." It is better to hold an inadequate idea of sin and punishment than to attempt to serve a God whom you do not really trust; let us take care that such religion as we have is a genuine one, and it is far better to assume that certain passages in the Bible have been misunderstood than attempt the impos-

sible task of trusting with our hearts Someone of whom our conscience disapproves.

But having cleared the air in this way first, let us proceed to look more coolly at the evidence for this charge of vindictive cruelty. It is clear that there must be some mistake in supposing that the character of God is represented as so vindictive in the Gospels; inasmuch as historically it is the Gospels themselves which have created this demand that God must be considered as a loving Father. Anyone acquainted with the conceptions of God in other religions which present Him now as the jealous One, now as a kind of irresponsible Allah, now as a great Sensualist, and even among the Jews rather as a Ruler than a Father, will gratefully acknowledge that to the Gospels and the Gospels alone we owe the idea of a God of love.

Stripping off, then, the imagery obviously drawn from the fires of Gehenna, which ceaselessly burned the offal and rubbish outside Jerusalem, how are we to reconcile the clear revelation of severe punishment, and possibly lasting punishment, with the justice of God?

Now, we may take it as an axiom that, as an old writer says, "When self-will ceases hell ceases."

The sin carries with it the hell, whether here or hereafter, and when the self-will which is at the root of the sin ceases, the hell ceases. But here comes the point, Will the self-will cease? We lightly sometimes conclude that it must, but we have terrible evidence that on the other hand it may not. Do we never see men so hardened even now in drunken habits that, apparently, we may almost say that they cannot turn? Do we not know what happens to those who give themselves away so utterly to lust that their very conscience becomes seared with a red-hot iron? What is to happen to those who say now or at the end of a million years, "Evil, be thou my good"? *Take them to heaven?* But heaven would be hell to them; the purity of heaven would scorch the mere sensualist. *Break their free will, and make them good?* But you break then the very thing which makes them in the image of God. *Melt them with love?* But what if they will not melt? "No soul will be lost," says Dr. Pusey, who may be taken as the most orthodox of the orthodox, "who has not had the Father throw His arms round him, look in his face with eyes of love, and has deliberately rejected Him." "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father."

It is this, then, against which our Lord warns us in His earnest and passionate words:—the possibility of so hardening our wills as not to be able to turn? To have within us always the burning flame of inextinguishable hate, to carry about with us the growing sense of shame—that shame which still glories in its shame—this is hell with a vengeance, whether here or hereafter, and it is a hell into which any one of us may drift. Are you dallying to-day, my brother, with some seductive temptation, letting your thoughts play round it? Remember that this is the first step towards a true hell which may begin here and last hereafter, and from which even God cannot save you if you persist.

Dr. Paget, in his Oxford House paper on "Eternal Punishment," pictures a man coming with a heart full of lust and hate to a home where a loving wife and children are waiting for him, and a bright welcome ready for him. Whose fault is it, he asks, that he hates the whole thing as he looks round and turns with a curse away? And Dr. Paget's answer must carry the conscience of us all with him: "At any rate, not the wife's."

With infinite love and care a home has been prepared for each human soul, and a welcome

made ready, in these touching words: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Whose fault is it if in despite of love, in defiance of every divine effort, that soul clings to the sin which carries in itself the fire prepared, not for men's souls, but for the devil and his angels? Whose fault, I ask? At any rate, not God's.

3. We have only a few moments left in which to deal with the last slur cast on the justice of God: "Did the Judge of all the earth do right when He accepted an innocent sufferer in the place of the guilty?" Clearly, it could not be right unless three conditions were fulfilled. The sufferer must be a perfectly voluntary one; He must be so joined to the guilty ones as in a real way to infect them with His innocence; and a guarantee must be given that their lives, too, should be changed and become like the sufferer's own.

Theories which make the Atonement the pacification of an angry Father, who hated the sin but did not love the sinner; which make it a tribute to the devil; which speak of mere substitution as its essence without any thought of kinship—such theories are essentially immoral, and revolt the

conscience. But if, as the Christian Church holds, the Atonement was the perfect satisfaction of a broken law—a law which had to be satisfied because it was part of the very thing that made God good, as justice is an integral part in the character of a righteous nature; if this satisfaction was equally the will of the Father and the Son, the Father being the Saviour as much as the Son, and the Son hating the sin as much as the Father; if man was first bound to the Son of God in the Incarnation by ties which nothing could break, and every son of man became to Him part of His own body; if forgiveness presupposes a change of heart, and full salvation means salvation from the power as well as from the guilt of sin, then it is no more immoral for us to be sheltered by the name of an Elder Brother than for a prisoner to be let out of cells, on condition of good behaviour, under cover of the good name of the regiment to which he belongs; it is rather a glorious design, only partially understood by us even now, by which justice might be reconciled with mercy, and the sinner saved without establishing the precedent of unpunished sin.

If, then, that great accusation fall to the ground, what do I give you as the message of what we

call here Judges' Day? This—and surely it is a glorious one—that every soul may rest with confidence under the shelter of the justice of God. We shall never understand all things here; we are all agnostics in a sense, and shall be to the end; "we know in part and only in part," but we know enough to trust God. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "His righteousness standeth like the strong mountains; His judgments are like the great deep."

What a peace it gives to a restless world!

> "They drift away! Ah, God, they drift for ever!
> But overhead the boundless arch of heaven
> Now fades to night, now blazes into day:
> O God! my God! Thou wilt not drift away!"

What satisfaction for the hungry conscience—a perfectly just Being at the centre of all things! "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; His countenance will behold the thing that is just."

And, above all, what inspiration for life! Here is a worthy object at last for its aim:

> "There's heaven above, and night by night
> I look right through its gorgeous roof;
> No suns and moons, though e'er so bright,
> Avail to stop me; splendour-proof
> I keep the broods of stars aloof:

God's Justice

For I intend to get to God,
  For 'tis to God I speed so fast,
For in God's breast, my own abode,
  Those shoals of dazzling glory, passed,
  I lay my spirit down at last."

III

IS THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND NOW TRUE TO HER IDEAL?*

"The kingdom of God is come unto you."—St. Matt. xii. 28.

"As He is, so are we in this world."—1 St. John iv. 17.

THERE is one great statement which brings more comfort to the human soul than almost any other statement in the Bible. "He that hath seen Me," says Jesus Christ, "hath seen the Father." What is this unseen Being like? The unseen God is like Jesus Christ, that strong, that winning personality: for all time the glory, grace and truth of God have been shown to the world "in the face of Jesus Christ." But, as so often happens, one question answered leads to another.

* Preached on the Sunday following the meeting of the Church Congress in London, 1899.

Have we any witness of the unseen Jesus Christ? We say in one of our most touching hymns:

> "We saw Thee not when Thou didst come
> To this poor world of sin and death,
> Nor e'er beheld Thy cottage home
> In that despisèd Nazareth;
> But we believe Thy footsteps trod
> Its streets and plains, Thou Son of God."

Why do we believe it? Did Jesus Christ leave any witness in this world of His unseen presence? Does the revelation of the unseen stop with His ascension, or is there any living witness in our midst to-day to the reality of the unseen Jesus Christ? And of course it is quite possible that He might have left us none. He might have spoken His words and left His ideas, throwing them like bread upon the waters, and just leaving them to chance to last on down the ages. Certainly the evidence of history would be against any ideas lasting on for many ages if they were left like that. But He might have done so. Or, again, He might of course have left a book. Some of us remember the great price that was ready to be paid for a few pages of a book not so long ago, supposed to be the oldest copy of a writing of Moses; but imagine what the world would think of a book actually written by Jesus

Christ! Or, again, He might have done what some to-day would certainly have advised—He might have entrusted one idea to one society, one to another, that so by competition between the different societies and different bodies they might have spread the ideas which He left. It is, then, of the most priceless concern to every single one of us to know the way which Jesus thought the best for leaving His witness in the world.

And when we return to what was in His mind, it comes out perfectly clear from the New Testament: He came, we are told, "preaching the kingdom of God." He described it in language which has no meaning unless it was to be a visible kingdom of God on earth. It was to be a grain of mustard-seed growing, ever growing, until it filled the whole world. It was to be a net cast down into the great sea of humanity. He not only described it, but He formed it. Why does He pass away from the valley with a select few into the mountains and continually teach them, leaving for a time the poor and the sick and the halt and the blind. He tells us. After teaching them till at last they began to understand Him, He says in one of His few exclamations of joy: "On this rock I will build

My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* There in that little company He gets at least a nucleus; this was what He was working for—a body of men who understood the truth upon which He could build the thing on which His heart was set—His Church for all time. With His last breath on the last evening He prayed that it might be one, "as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." He prayed that it might be visibly one, "that the world may believe, that Thou hast sent Me." And as we watch the Church pass upon its way moulded, as it was started, by Jesus Christ Himself, we get a grasp of His magnificent idea: that here in the world to all time should be, not a book—though the society would bring a book with it—but a living, breathing, loving witness, to be always like Himself, always so patient, so unworldly, so full of strength and life before the world, that when men of the world saw it they should say, "He that hath seen this hath seen Christ," just as he that hath seen Christ hath seen the Father.

Now, it would be impossible in a few words

* See Canon Scott Holland's sermon, "The Rock of the Church," in "Creed and Character."

to trace in detail how that body, that society, of Jesus Christ, entrusted with His great idea, started on its course. It would take far more time than we have at our disposal to see how it spread, like a great river dividing into three main channels; how in this country, brought here probably in the second century and revived in the sixth, it was corrupted during the Middle Ages by error and superstitions; how it was purified at the Reformation; how it overflowed its banks afterwards into societies, which still belong to the soul if not to the body of the Church; and how it exists to-day in our midst, with the same organisation, the same sacraments, and with the same witness with which it started all those centuries ago. No, our task is a far simpler one; it is to ask this question, which we can scarcely fail to ask on the Sunday after the Church Congress, How far are we—that portion of the Church whose mission is to represent our Saviour to the people of England—how far are we true to our ideal? "As He is, so are we in this world." Is it a description, or has it become a sarcasm?

Now, last Sunday we said that the Church Congress would fail in its purpose for us if it was taken in any other spirit except that of self-

examination and penitence. We saw that nothing could be more fatal than to meet together in a spirit of self-congratulation. It so happens that in the course of last week we have had some very searching questions asked of the Church by numbers of its own sons, and out of those questions there are four to which we are bound to give an answer, however short. It is quite certain that if on any one of these four points the Church does not truly witness to her Saviour, she has been untrue to her great ideal.

And the first point is, Does she represent Him in His kindness to the poor? One able speaker told us of all the work done by bodies like the Salvation Army, and held them up as an example to the Church of what her work ought to be. Thank God for all the Salvation Army does that is good! thank God for all that is done by any who are inspired by the Holy Ghost throughout the length and breadth of England! That is what the Church herself says, and in judging the Church we must have a knowledge, and an intimate knowledge, of what the Church does. I venture to say that on this point the Church of England, to those who know the facts, comes out with a true and splendid record. Whom do

we find perpetually at work in season and out of season in the slums, positively the only people of any education who are giving up themselves to live in such poor places? It is the clergy and the workers of the Church of England, buried in the poorest slums, who are carrying on, year by year, without thanks and without reward, an unadvertised work for the good of the people. You would find that the poor of England to-day, if their voice could speak the message of their hearts, would tell you that in the clergy and the workers of the Church of England, especially in the poorest parts, they find their best friends. There was a Congregational minister, whom I knew, of one of the largest and most flourishing churches of the East-End who came over to the Church, and when we asked him what first made him conscious of the great work the Church is doing, he gave as his reason that while serving on the council at the Mansion House for the relief of the poor, he found that not one single case came up before us at the Board but was known to at least one or other of the members of the Church of England who sat upon that Board. No, let us go forth from the Church Congress to keep this record. There is creeping into some

churches the miserable idea that it is enough to stay in the church and let the people come to see you. I say, Perish that idea! It is a new idea in the Church of England. Our idea has always been, "Go out into the streets and lanes and compel them to come in, that My house may be full."

Then, secondly, it was more than hinted by one or two speakers at the Church Congress that the Church of England is a worldly church. On such a point we have to examine ourselves, both clergy and laity. There is one ugly fact—let us be honest—to which we cannot shut our eyes, and it is this: that at this time, when the Church is so desperately poor, there is a large falling off in the candidates for Holy Orders. It might be urged that it is because the young men of England find that to be ordained is to be poor all their lives that they cease to come forward. But the reason is probably a different one: it is far harder for parents to find the money to educate the children, it is far harder now to send their sons to the public school and the University to prepare for Orders. And this gives a great chance to those who can. You that have children of your own, will you offer them now in the Church's poverty—offer them now for the

service of the Church, when there can be no slur for a moment on your motives—that you may say of your son, "The world shall be crucified unto him and he unto the world"? But if this test comes home to those who might come forward for Ordination, it must also be applied to the laity, in ordinary society as well. If in the city, if in society, they find you just as worldly as those who make no profession of religion, and do not belong to the Church at all, if they find the laity of the Church just as sharp in bargaining to the point of harshness, just as much set upon making a fortune, then we may be perfectly certain of this, that hundreds of eyes are on you, and that they are watching you as a member of the Church to see whether you truly do, or do not, represent your Saviour. Instead of repelling with scorn the accusation, let us take it to our consciences, and go forth from this Church Congress to live more thoroughly up to the standard which St. Paul set when he said: "The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

Thirdly, the accusation was brought against us, in a speech that many of us will never forget, that the Church has failed as a great peacemaker. The Church, it has been said, ought to be the

great Peace Society of the world, and is not; it ought to preach peace perpetually to a passionate and covetous age. Have we, or have we not, represented truly the principles of peace? We are bound to ask the question. Certainly, if we have not; if we have fanned the war spirit as such, we have failed as representatives of the Prince of Peace. But only those who do not believe in prayer will ignore the fact that daily prayer has been rising at every service in its quiet way, asking the God of peace and the God of battles to grant peace to the world according to His own will.

There is not a man here who is not a lover of peace. But there are worse things than war. I associate myself as a Churchman with what a leading Nonconformist says: "We long for peace, we pray for peace, but a lasting peace is sometimes only possible through war." We remember that when the commanders of a ship are steering round a difficult corner the crew and the passengers ought not to choose that time to shout advice in their ears. Our leaders are leaders of a free people, and though at the proper place and at the proper time we hold them accountable, we hold that in silently praying for their guidance we best do our duty.

But more than this; in the war that is upon us we have a part to play as a Church; we have to keep the nation calm and steady; we have to discourage that ready trust in accounts of atrocities which more than anything else stirs up passion and revenge—accounts often exaggerated and often found to be untrue. We send out our own dear ones to represent their country; we follow them with love, and we follow them with our prayers. But we must have spiritual understanding also to remember that those also against whom we fight believe their cause to be right. The Boer mother who sends out her boy to-day to the battle sends him out trusting in God and thinking he is about to fight for his country in a right cause. We must remember that, we must pray with that feeling, and during the whole of this war, so long as it lasts, the Church has to do her part in keeping the nation in that serious peace-loving frame of mind which becomes a God-fearing people.

Lastly, the Church, if she represents her Saviour, must be at unity in herself. "Is Christ divided?" asked St. Paul with indignant emphasis. And there is no obstacle to the spread of Christianity anything like so great as the divisions of Christendom. I must leave out the underlying

unity between the three main branches of the Church, the Roman, the Greek, the Anglican. I must leave out that common ground which we share with the English Nonconformists, and which Mr. Gladstone never failed to notice—the belief in the Atonement, the Trinity, and the Incarnation. We have only time to ask this: Is there any ground of comfort underlying the divisions of our own Church of England? My friends, if you would go night after night through a great district like East London, you would find the underlying unity. I go from parish to parish, and I find the High Churchman, with his mission services and often his prayer meeting, preaching the Gospel in simple language to the people; I find constantly those who are called Evangelical eager about Confirmation, greatly alive to bringing their people to Holy Communion, and a substantial Church teaching and a substantial Church principle underlying them all. I have no sense of superintending a divided Church in East London. And if some are asked now for a great sacrifice, to exercise a stern self-denial in matters of ceremony and custom which have been dear to them for many years, we ought to pray, especially at this time, that all may have the grace to rise for the

sake of the whole body to this act of true self-sacrifice for the sake of peace.

And so with unity as our great purpose, with a true sense of the message of peace in its deepest sense entrusted to our care, with an unworldly ideal, with a glorious hope of being able to convey the love of Christ to the English nation, let us go forth from this Congress to our great work. "As he is, so are we in this world." We represent the unseen Christ. Let us so represent Him that many who do not believe Him will yet come to worship One Whom, not having seen, they will love, and, though they see Him not, will rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

IV

"WELCOME HOME!"*

DEAR brothers, there is only one text possible to-day. Every heart in London has been feeling it, and the voices of those thousands in the streets have been proclaiming it to you—"Welcome Home!" They are only two short words, but are full of meaning. First, Home. You are realising, perhaps for the first time in your lives, all that Home means. When you assembled here before you started on this campaign you had, perhaps, never been away from England before, never, at least, for very long; but to-day, as you have come through the familiar streets, and seen again well-remembered faces, and grasped again the hands of those you love, you know what it is to be "at home," and you attach a new

* An Address to the City Imperial Volunteers, delivered in St. Paul's on their return from South Africa.

meaning to the old saying, "There's no place like Home."

And then, Welcome! We are trying to give it you; we have been preparing it for weeks. It is now nearly twelve months ago that the call of duty came, and you leapt up from your offices, your desks, your comfortable homes, at the call. "Here we are," you cried; "Send us." And London sent you; you went out from our midst, and nobly have you done your duty. Do not think we have forgotten you; we have prayed for you every day in this cathedral and in countless churches and chapels throughout the land; we have watched your long marches; we have heard with pride how gallantly you have borne yourselves in the hour of danger; we have counted your danger our danger, and your praise our praise; and we receive you back to-day with no foolish adulation, but with honest pride and affectionate gratitude as sons and brothers who have done their duty.

But you come home not the same men as when you went out. Sixty-three who were here when you took leave of us are not here to-day. What are we to say of them? What better than the words which will be inscribed to their memory in

every parish church where they worshipped, "*A sweet and a noble thing it is to die for one's country*"—a glorious thing to die for Queen, and freedom, and duty—and no one, when he comes to die, can die a better than a soldier's death. That is one thing we can say; and the other is the Christian message—ever old and ever new—we shall see them again! Yes! mourners for the dead, you who have been given rightly the first claim upon the cathedral to-day, it brings tears to your eyes to see the others come home—full of life and health—and you say, "Ah! if only he were here too." But you *will* see your own dear brother or son again. If they have died, as we trust and believe, in faith, there has been a home-coming of those City Imperial Volunteers in another world, and you will find them waiting for you in the Eternal Home.

But in another sense you are not the same men as when you went out; no one can go through what you have gone through and be the same; you have been face to face with death; you have seen others of your own age shot at your side, and you have found out, if never before, amid the grim realities of the battle-field, the need of God.

What, then, do we expect you to have brought

back? We look for a deeper sense of the great reality of life: how short it is; how much we have to do in it; and how, if we are to do any good in it at all, we must play the man. And we also look for an increased sense of brotherhood with your fellow-men, that comradeship of which your Honorary Colonel reminded you before you started from South Africa, when he said: "There is one thing you can do, and that is to carry into the heart of the nation what you now know of the British soldier with whom you have fought shoulder to shoulder for some months past. Tell every one of his bravery, his endurance, his gentleness, and his good behaviour. Tell them what a noble fellow he is, and how at a moment's notice he is prepared to lay down his life for his Queen and country."

Yes! you have fought side by side with men from many climes; you have found courage, kindliness and unselfishness in men of every sort and kind; will it not bring you back to us full of a belief in human nature, and make you help towards the restoration, in every man here and abroad, of the Divine Image, help us to make possible for the dwellers in our poorest slums the life of man? And, lastly, we shall expect to find

in you henceforward men of God—men whom God has brought through many perils, and helped in many difficulties, men who believe from what they have seen that if they are to have God with them in death, they must serve Him in life, and that the true man's life is the life lived in God.

Welcome Home then, dear brothers, and again, Welcome Home; and may the service you have rendered your country be an earnest of the life-service which you will render to your God. May the home-coming of the City Imperial Volunteers be the acquisition of a regiment of Imperial Volunteers for the Empire of Jesus Christ, and a force that will never fail the City of God.

V

THE HAPPY WARRIOR*

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."—JOSHUA v. 13-15.

THERE are many mistakes which are made about Christianity, but one of the worst and the most fatal and the most common is this—that the ideal of the Christian character is a womanish character rather than a manly one. And the mistake arises from forgetting a very simple thing—that the New Testament pre-

* Preached at the Annual Church Parade of the London Rifle Brigade, for the first time as its Chaplain.

supposes the old Testament, that when we hear so much about gentleness, and love, and forgiveness in the New Testament, it is because it is on those points that the Old Testament was so weak. God's revelation is a progressive revelation, and He teaches the world line by line, bit by bit. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, sounds a rather bloodthirsty maxim, but it is an improvement on what went before—ten eyes for an eye, and ten teeth for a tooth. But though an improvement on the morality that went before it, it needed to be corrected in the New Testament, and therefore all this teaching in the New Testament about love, and forgiveness, and gentleness, supplies the new element which the perfect character requires, while it presupposes the old manly virtues of the Old Testament—courage, strength, perseverance. These graces are taken for granted as the basis of the true Christianity, and no one ever showed them more splendidly than did Jesus Christ Himself. And, as representing these, my comrades of the regiment to which I am proud now to belong, I put before you the character of the soldier Joshua.

If you come to look at his character, what a splendid soldier he was! We must not

judge him by the standard of to-day. Each age can only reveal the morality of which that age is capable. We do not kill women and children when we take a town, and when men have surrendered we do not massacre them as they did in Joshua's days. No man can rise altogether above the standards of his age. You must take Joshua as a soldier, and judge him by the standard of the age in which he lived; and when you judge him by that, what a fine soldier he was, ever ready either for defence or attack! When the Amalekites fell upon the rearguard, Joshua was there to repel them in a moment. Defeated for a time at Ai, he was not discouraged; but again he tried, and again, and at last he succeeded. Up in the early morning, he is off to take Gibeon, and when on one famous occasion, which is often misunderstood, he saw a storm sweeping up the valley which he thought would blot out the daylight before he had accomplished the full pursuit, it is the very keenness of the man that cries out: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon, until the people have avenged themselves upon their enemies." Therefore, as we watch this man passing up and down before Jericho, we can sympathise with him,

and can understand what he felt. He was like Clive before his great battle, alone in solitary meditation and prayer before the great crisis. For Jericho, remember, was the key of the position. If he once could take Jericho—this town that confronted him as he walked up and down—he knew full well he could win the Promised Land. And while he paced up and down in silent prayer, suddenly an unexpected Figure stands before him: "He looked, and behold there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand." Joshua, who feared no one, instantly challenged him: "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"

"Nay," was the reply, "but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and worshipped. There you have our first lesson, my comrades. The true soldier combines courage with reverence. There are some short-sighted, ignorant, foolish people who imagine that it is an unmanly thing to pray, that people are divided into two classes—the manly ones who look after themselves and no one else, and the religious ones who take to their knees and pray. Joshua, Havelock, Gordon, and thousands of splendid soldiers in the field who have been devout religious men, answer that this

conception is a lying delusion. The true soldier, the best soldier, the bravest soldier, is the man who is not ashamed to pray. If there are any here who are still under the impression that to pray is womanish, or that a real man's life can be lived without prayer, let them look at the great soldier Joshua on his knees in prayer. Man is born to pray, just as a fish is born to swim. The instinct shows itself in sudden accidents. A man who has never prayed in his life goes down on his knees and asks the Lord to have mercy upon him. Is it right to pray in dangers and in crises, and not to pray in health and strength? Surely it is an unmanly thing to fly to God in trouble, and not to worship Him and serve Him in days of health and strength. The first lesson we learn from Joshua is to combine courage with reverence, and not to be ashamed to pray.

And then, secondly, look—as we should say, if we were playing in a game of football—look at the unselfish game Joshua played. It is not a pleasant thing to be superseded when you think victory is within your grasp. It is not an easy thing, when there is an opportunity coming of greatly distinguishing yourself, to have to hand over the command to another. The desire for glory, the desire for

distinction, is a natural desire, a natural instinct, and in its place we need not be ashamed of it at all. But the true soldier subordinates his natural desire for distinction to his cause, to the glory of his regiment. He plays an unselfish game. He is looking to his cause or his country, and not to personal distinction for himself. A particular choice may come to any single one of us at any time. We may have to choose between coveting personal glory and distinction and being fair to a comrade; between something which will put us high in the sight of men and doing a true, unselfish thing; between pampering our animal instincts and trampling some vice under-foot. When that choice comes, for God's sake let us remember Joshua, and win a greater victory than the conquering of Jericho—the conquering of ourselves!

And so, again, there is a third characteristic of the great soldier which we see in Joshua; and that is his splendid loyalty to his orders. If you come to think of it, no man ever had more apparently absurd orders given him than Joshua had on this occasion. Instead of marching at the head of his men and conquering Jericho by force of arms, he was told for seven days to do what was

apparently perfectly useless—to walk round Jericho, and to carry with him the ark of God. Not until the seven days had passed was he to command the people to shout, and then he was told the victory would be within his grasp. Think of the obloquy and the scoffing of which this gallant soldier would be the object as he walked round the place he was apparently afraid to attack. But, having once believed that this heavenly visitor was indeed the Captain of the Lord's host, Joshua obeyed his orders to the letter; and because he obeyed them to the letter he won the victory. At the right moment down went the walls of Jericho, and every man went on straight before him. Has it ever occurred to you, my brothers, how much in religion is really a matter of order and obedience? There are many things that we cannot possibly understand, but where the order is perfectly clear we must obey. For instance, as we listened to the Epistle this morning, we must have thought how difficult is St. Paul's teaching about baptism. And yet, even if we cannot understand it altogether, who is there that can deny that to baptize our children and to be baptized ourselves are two orders of our heavenly Captain given unto all the world? The command was:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every living creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost." "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." And though we may not fully understand all the meaning of such a thing as baptism, it is clearly ordered. He never ordered anything as a mere form. You may be sure there is some deeply spiritual meaning in the service He has ordained. Or take, again, confirmation; not commanded in so many words, as baptism was, by Christ in the Gospels, it has always been in the Church the complement of baptism: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. For as yet they had only been baptized." There is no service which ought to appeal more closely to the soldier than our beautiful service of confirmation, when the young soldier comes out clothed with heavenly grace before he goes out fully armed into the battle of life.

As with baptism and confirmation, so with Holy Communion. It was not meant for the clergy or a few select men and women—it was meant for the fighting multitude, for everyone who has to fight the battle of life, that they may have

Divine strength to fight it. "This is My body"; "This is My blood"; "Do this in remembrance of Me." This is the order of our Captain, and without understanding we ought to obey.

One word more, and I have done. Have you ever thought what a picture of the life of intercession is presented in that going round Jericho day after day? There is nothing that we have to take more on faith than the act of praying for others—nothing that appears more hopeless, and to have at first so little result. But Christ's command is: "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers unto His harvest." Time after time we have the command given to us to pray for others. The man who was sick, and whose friends brought him to the feet of Jesus, was a type of successful intercession; for "Jesus seeing *their* faith, said to the sick of the palsy: Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." Therefore, the going round Jericho day after day in patient, persistent obedience to orders is a grand encouragement to the life of patient intercession. I put, then, before you this character of the true soldier Joshua—brave, reverent, unselfish, loyal to orders, as a true type of what we ought to aim at being.

The Happy Warrior

The poet Wordsworth in a beautiful passage paints for us the character of the happy warrior:

"Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover, and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired."

Whether among poor or rich, among men or women, in any age or clime,

"This is the happy Warrior; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be."

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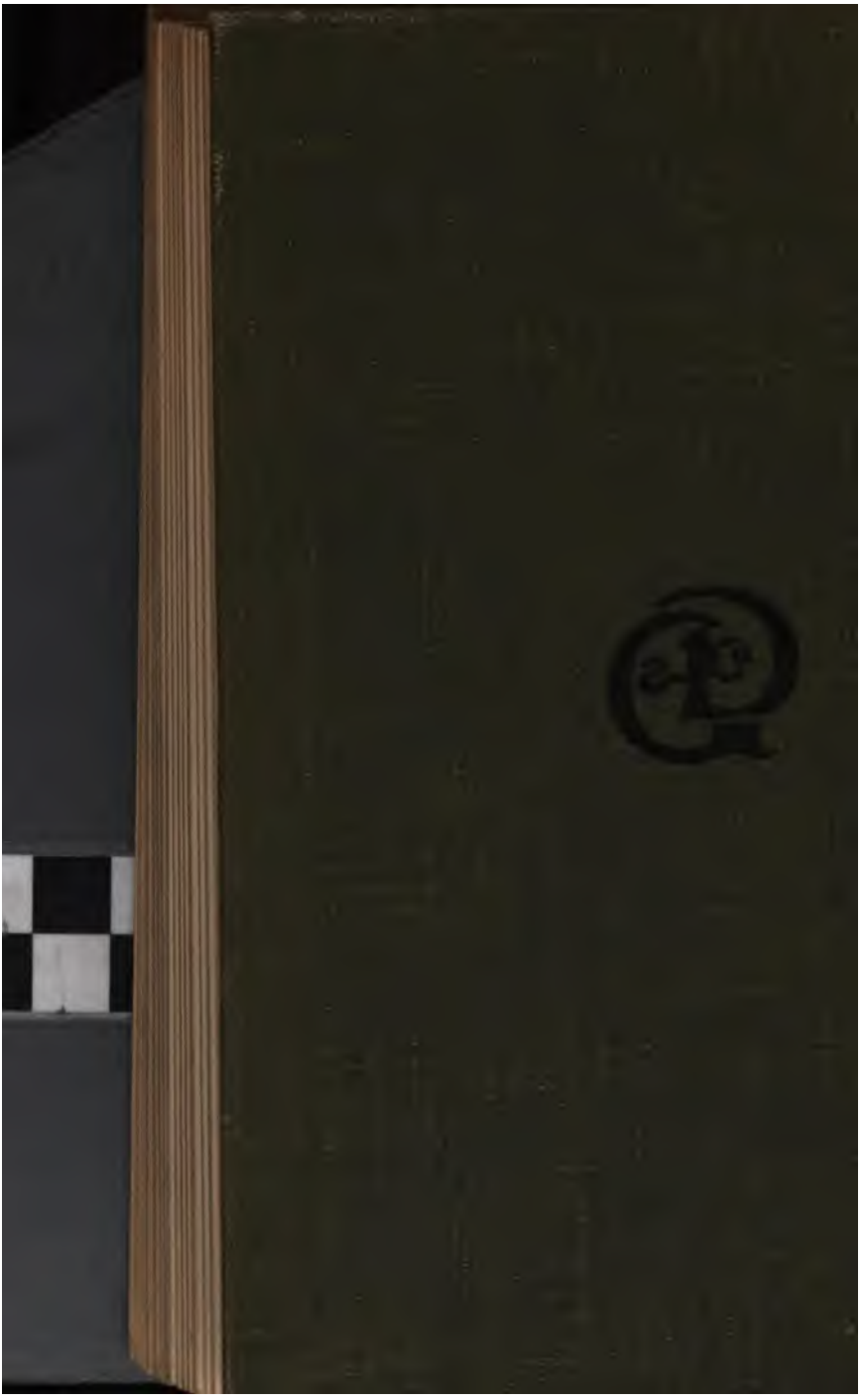
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